

Meeting Minutes- FINAL
DENVER PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
December 9, 2020 – 5:30- 7:30 pm
Virtual Meeting: Via Zoom

Board Members In attendance:

Noel Copeland, Fran Coleman, Lee Rains Thomas, Frank Rowe, Meredith Levy, Lynne Mason, Amy Razzaque, Leslie Twarogowski, Lisa Calderon, Molly McKinley, Pam Jiner, Jack Paterson, Chandi Aldena, Florence Navarro, Marla Rodriguez, Tashmesia Mitchell (Tash), Trena Marsal

Absent: None

CALL TO ORDER

Marla calls meeting to order at 5:33
Lee takes roll call with question on favorite winter activity
Marla- full agenda, thanks public for sharing
Welcome to new member, Chandi Aldena.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Approve November Minutes with amendments
Fran- correction- #2 was assigned to sustainability committee
Other – remove notes about gathering other info
Fran makes a motion to approve minutes, Frank seconds
Unanimously approved

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Loren Hansen- car free parks

Leads non-profit, speaking in favor of keeping parks car free after pandemic, value of parks for people to ride, skate and enjoy parks, not cars.

David Chen- car free parks

Sloan's lake resident, helped paint coy fish on streets to encourage more use, submitted a document with park by park recommendations with how to improve access to keep parks car free. Parks for people. Hopes for continuing conversations and support. Sent email to board members.

Amy Kenreich- car free parks

Support of car free parks, near Wash park, speaks of owning a car as a privilege. Designate some streets for just people. Park is a safe route for Steele students. Keep the parks for people.

Allen Cowgill- car free parks

Lives near Sloan's lake. Nice to have a street to feel safe to bike on. With sidewalks in disrepair, we need safe place for little ones, elderly. More room to move- safe spaces for all.

Rob Toftness- car free parks

Denver bicycle lobby- submitted document. City park resident, prime target to temporary modify as needed. Parks can be used for special events, but without cars all the time. Right of way parking, ensuring access for all, ensuring ADA access.

Brian Ross- car free parks

City park neighborhood, ADA access and parking that can be repurposed. Wildlife impacts- more sensitive than we are often times.

Scott Sanderson- car free parks

Cheesman park area, city streets are designed for cars and bike paths are often filled with aggressive riders. Seems to be the greatest improvement to quality of life. On behalf of everyone in Denver asks to keep all parks car free.

Helene Orr- Sanderson Gulch Pollinator Gardens

Would like to collaborate with parks and rec to help with design and implementation. Councilwoman Clark's office/ DPR staff would like to have this group participate. Outdoor classroom. Concerns with possibility to use herbicides to maintain the pollinator garden. Wonders why we would have educational classroom for kids and establish a garden with herbicides? Suggests that we work together to make it possible to create a garden without harming the planning. ***follow up- assign to Sustainability and Resiliency Committee**

Bryan Wilson- car free parks

Congress park resident. Supports car free parks with ADA compliance ensuring everyone has access to parks. Has noted wildlife impacts as well. Visits many parks.

Matthew Bossler: (Via chat note) I have to run, but I want to express my support for keeping park streets car-free and expanding it in other parks. As a parent of a child learning to ride a bike, the open roads in City Park and Cheesman allow *me* to relax and enjoy my time while my kid rolls along, without fear of them being hit with a car. Also, I am a professional landscape architect consulting to UCD in support of the College and City's eDEN project, which is being co-sponsored by DOTI and CPD. eDEN envisions an integrated network of community-focused, green streets throughout Denver, and is strategizing how to build upon the humanized street interventions from COVID to realize long-term improvements to mobility, public health, and economic development. The students in the integrated design studio (planning/urban design/landscape architecture) unanimously identified the open streets within the parks as an essential backbone of the network upon which we, as a city, can build. W/o them, eDEN becomes exponentially more difficult to build.

Frank Locantor: (Via chat note) I'm also in support of car-free parks. **And, I'd like to suggest coordination between DOTI and their slow-streets / n'hood bikeways with DPR's car free streets. Perfect example of how this could work beautifully is the 16th Ave shared street and how it fortuitously connects to City Park via The Esplanade. Thinking about how people can get to the city parks in a safe, non-car manner is important for connectivity.

PRAB COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach committee

Lisa - New development to have Lisa and Leslie co-chair outreach committee. Meets once a month, open to anyone in the city to recommend topics for PRAB. Community members set the agenda.

Leslie shares- length of time community surveys, would like to address how long surveys are out in the community, Sanderson gardens, strategic acquisition, sunken garden park, wants to ensure RNO's have time to publicize. Authentic engagement. Perhaps revisit logistical issues like gathering signatures.

Lisa- Park Hill golf course advisory group- very strongly wants to have PRAB representation on the board.

Wants to have information to get 1 mile radius, not just 6 block radius. Joint appointments with CPD (Laura Aldrade) and Happy (director of parks).

Follow up with Marla to apply to Park Hill Golf Course

Board members and director share gratitude for Tash for service for parks, recreation, equity.

Sustainability/ Resiliency Committee

Will be meeting on Friday 12/11 at 1:00, instead of the last Friday of the month (12/25).

Will be brainstorming topics for the year. Send emails for topics to be addressed.

Marla wants to make sure all committee meetings are listed and all PRAB members can join any committee.

Planning/ Design Committee

met on 11/17 (Meredith)

Reviewed goals. Took time to reflect. Set objectives for next year.

Sanderson gulch and sunken gardens, strategic acquisition plan

Game plan annual report

Next meeting is on 12/15 to set priorities and talk about restrooms and water access in parks, Denver bicycle lobby will present.

Lynne- Working on car free parks and speaks for the need to balance use of elderly and disabled use along with everything.

Also will be following up about parks/ private partnerships.

Jesus- doing targeted efforts to gather responses from underrepresented communities.

Lisa hopes to continue with gathering feedback from diverse groups.

Molly- wants to have interested members join the meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. **Game Plan Annual Report** – The 2019 annual report has been completed is now available on the DPR website. Here is a link to the report:
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e24a07c6c65d4d329b55dfbeb85af669>
The next annual report for 2020 will be completed this spring to get back on track with original plans for the report to precede and help to inform the 2022 budgeting process.
1. **Covid recovery** – There are no new developments that are significant. Staff redeployments continue and we are continuing to work on licensing to potentially add three or four more learning labs to support DPS students as needed. We will continue to be guided by public health orders regarding the re-opening of any facilities. Non-essential staff will continue to work from home at least through the end of the year and we anticipate a very gradual return when circumstances permit into the spring or summer.
2. **The renaming of Columbus Park** - The ordinance for the renaming of the park to La Raza Park has been presented to City Council including the PRAB recommendation and is moving rapidly through the Council process. It was approved on consent by the LUTI Committee on Tuesday, December 8th and is expected to be adopted at the Council meeting on Dec 21st. There will be a courtesy public hearing on the renaming that evening. DPR will continue to work with the citywide Renaming Commission on other facilities and assets recommended for renaming by that group. We will keep PRAB apprised of those recommendations along with the processes to be initiated.

Happy Holidays and a safe, healthy and peaceful New Year!

Questions/Issues:

1. **Parks road closures update** – Results of the survey are being compiled and analyzed; survey participants did not reflect the diversity of the entire community, so additional efforts of targeted outreach to low income and communities of color will continue; Staff will be bringing survey and proposed actions to the PRAB committee most likely in January.
2. **Annual goals** – We are pleased to hear that PRAB committees are formulating goals and priorities for 2021. Committees are encouraged to share those goals with the department in January which is also when staff will be putting together 2021 goals.

Tash Mitchell will be sorely missed. On behalf of the department, we express our deepest gratitude to you for your leadership and commitment as a member of PRAB. Thank you for being a champion for youth, underserved communities and communities of color. We wish you tremendous success in your next endeavors!

OTHER ITEMS

Update on equity statement, shares draft proclamation, will follow up after equity group meets. Tash, Lisa, Trena, Pam worked to incorporate all contributions and the Game Plan. It reflects equity in all parks and services. Take time reading document in order to give feedback to the team. Hope to adopt the statement in January officially. *Equity meeting for PRAB work group- 12/16

Board Review of 2020

Marla reviews data collected through one on one interviews, surveys and shares about working with Dr. Tyler to review and come up with game plan.

Stemmed from equity work and began process to gather feedback.
One on one conversations with each board member.

Summary of interviews: Marla shares the feedback. Heard a deep commitment to parks, open space, recreation. Proud of re-naming parks, equity focus, committee structure. Heard over and over- still have work to do on what is the committee work and process, can we all align on what the role of PRAB is. Work on respectful discourse and how we work together. Executive Committee has taken a step to begin thinking of norms to get us started. We don't want to be city council or admin. Want to define PRAB work. Relationships are hard, especially in the time of zoom meetings. You'll see more engaging activities to build relationships and get to know one another.

Developing group norms: Lee facilitates conversation to develop group norms. Board discusses, modifies and agrees to the following norms. Will revisit after 3 months and to make sure they are meeting the group's needs. Suggestion to include on top of each agenda as a reminder. Will ask for feedback after each meeting to hold ourselves accountable to our agreed upon norms (optional and anonymous for PRAB members). Will add an area for new business on the agenda and have an opportunity for PRAB to bring up issues for a later date- parking lot.

PRAB Norms Dec. 2020

Be respectful and presume positive intentions
Seek first to understand and then to be understood
Stay focused on topics at hand
Allow space for all to have a voice
Listen without judgement
Live our values of equity and inclusion

Coming soon... (Executive committee and committee chairs will work on this) Utilizing process to bring new ideas/issues forward, whether it goes to committee or PRAB or department

Florence reviews city charter, bylaws and mission statement for PRAB. Our guiding documents. The charter is what cannot be changed. The mission may need to be updated and we need to revisit our bylaws.

Charter

§ 2.4.3 Board of Parks and Recreation.

There is hereby created a Board of Parks and Recreation (hereinafter called the "Board") consisting of nineteen members. One of the members shall be a member of the Board of School District No. 1 designated by the Board of the School District. Five members of the Board shall be appointed by the Mayor. Thirteen of the members shall represent the thirteen City Council members and shall be appointed by the thirteen Councilmembers. The appointees of the eleven district Council members shall reside in the district of the appointing member. The appointees of the two at-large Councilmembers shall each reside in the City and County of Denver. Members shall serve at the pleasure of their respective appointing authorities. Members of the Board shall serve without pay. The Board shall advise the Manager with respect to the policy and operation of the Department and shall review and comment on the proposed annual budget for the Department.

(Charter 1960, A4.3, A4.3-1; Amended May 17, 1955; amended May 19, 1987)

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 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 Parks 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.

Board Announcements

Lynne- restrooms are a big issue across the city.

Want the committee to examine it and then bring back to whole board

ADJOURNMENT at 7:41