



CITY OF LAKE OSWEGO NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

March 30, 2005

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chair Jonathan Snell called the March 30, 2005 meeting of the Natural Resources Advisory Board to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. in the Human Resources Conference Room of City Hall, 380 A Avenue, Lake Oswego, Oregon.

Members present were Chair Jonathan Snell, Vice Chair Chris Roth, Nancy Gronowski, and *Sarah Asby. Ellen Adams, Russell Jones and Shirley Shangguan (student representative) were not present. [*Sarah joined the meeting during the Natural Resources Advisory Board (NRAB) Budget Recommendation discussion.]

Guests were Jason Martin and Morgan Holen, and Sherrie Smith, AmeriCorp, who served as the City's Natural Area Volunteer Project Coordinator. Staff present were Lisa Hamerlynck, Natural Resources Coordinator; and Bob Kincaid, Project Manager, Foothills Park planning.

II. MINUTES

The vote on the minutes took place after the NRAB Budget Recommendation discussion, when a quorum was present.

Vice Chair Roth moved to approve the Minutes of May 3, November 17, and December 15, 2004. Ms. Gronowski seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote of all members present.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Peg Tree Designated as a State Heritage Tree

The members were invited to attend a ceremony to designate the Peg Tree as a State Heritage Tree on April 29, 2005. Ms. Smith, announced that she had invited community organizations to participate in an Earth Day informational event on April 23, 2005, and that she was working with a local junior high school to plan a cleanup at the school on April 22, 2005. She said they expected 150 students to participate, and they planned a nature walk and a scavenger hunt for native plants. Ms. Hamerlynck announced the Naturescaping seminar was scheduled for April 30, 2005.

IV. REGULAR BUSINESS

Foothills Redevelopment Plan Update

Bob Kincaid, Project Manager, Foothills Park, discussed the current status of the effort to create the new park. Chair Snell advised him that the Board was particularly interested in how the natural area perimeters and the area along the Willamette River were to be managed. Mr. Kincaid related that the City planned to restore the site of the chip plant. He explained the anticipated design of the park addressed the lower elevation portion of the park – which tended to flood - by allowing it to flood, and installed a long dike that would protect the rest of the site from flooding. He advised that twelve landowners owned the large parcels that comprised Foothills, and he anticipated that over the long term property would be assembled for developments there. He predicted that the park itself would be completed by the end of October 2005. He reported the fill that was being brought into the site from downtown Portland was good quality soil.

Mr. Kincaid related that the Development Review Commission (DRC) had conditioned approval of the park project on a maintenance and management plan. He assured the Board that plan would address management of invasive species. He noted that both the Governor's plan and the City's intention was to restore the wetlands and clear out the ivy. He explained that the project was very large and complicated, and that one of the first challenges for the City was to negotiate with the City of Portland to address the old barbed wire fencing and invasive species on the wastewater treatment plant parcel. He explained the City of Lake Oswego had a recreation easement over that property. He said he was also negotiating a three to five-year maintenance plan for the area with Portland natural resources staff.

Mr. Kincaid assured the Board that the City staff had heard and was addressing the NRAB's concerns about the natural resource areas, even though a formal plan was not yet in place. He said the plan would reflect suggestions from natural resource experts, including Ms. Hamerlynck. For example, ecologically appropriate grass would be planted in some areas. Mr. Kincaid related that the City of Portland wanted to continue the river esplanade through the park. He predicted the wastewater treatment plant would not be removed from the site for many years, until some future time when the Oregon City treatment plant was expanded and waste could be piped there under the river. He observed that the entire region was interested in eventually combining services and making them more efficient.

Chair Snell reported that he had examined the plans, visited the site, and read the DRC findings and conditions of approval of the project. He described his concerns about the planning and timing of work in natural areas. He stressed those areas had to be addressed soon, so that undesirable nonnative plants along the waterfront and along the top of the bank did not have the opportunity to go to seed. He explained that after ivy was removed, other invasive plants received more sunlight and accelerated their growth. He advised that the natural areas should be addressed soon because it would take a long time for desirable vegetation to become established there. He agreed it was logical to

ask the City of Portland to apply its re-vegetation program there, as long as the City of Lake Oswego was an active participant in that effort.

Chair Snell recalled the DRC conditions called for a revised landscape plan and a restoration and planting plan for the entire riparian area, and not just the area along the pathway. He recalled that the agreement with the contractor only required him to remove a fence along the riparian woodland on southeast corner of the site, adjacent to Roehr Park. The Board recalled there were many invasive plants there. Chair Snell asked for a more specific plan and work schedule for the natural areas. Mr. Kincaid assured the group that the plan would address their concerns. He explained the staff was putting the basic components of the plan together as fast as they could, and one of their initial objectives was to negotiate an agreement with the City of Portland to remove their fencing and accomplish restoration. Mr. Kincaid reported that ivy was already being removed from the riparian woodland that belonged to the City of Lake Oswego. He invited the Board to follow the progress of the project from a viewing platform that had been built near the Ram Pub.

NRAB Budget Recommendations

The NRAB then discussed a draft memorandum to the City Manager prepared by Chair Snell that recommended a budget for maintaining and managing Open Space/Natural Areas. Chair Snell recalled that over the past few years the NRAB had consistently prioritized maintenance of natural areas. He worried that now that the City Council was inclined to use the additional revenue generated by the increase in the waste removal franchise fee for that purpose, the Councilors seemed to be ready to rely too heavily on volunteer labor.

Chair Snell asked the Board to support the strategy and budget he proposed. He pointed out it included funding for components related to the use of hired contractors, education, staffing and management. He explained that the most effective strategy for eradicating invasive species from an area was to use contractors do the initial removal, and then follow up with appropriate herbicides and coordinated volunteer projects to replant and establish more desirable species that would be more resistant to re-infestation. He related that he had discussed with Ms. Hamerlynck and Chris Jordan, Assistant City Manager, how his proposed strategy might be realistically funded and accomplished. He explained that his proposed approach was to budget the same amount of money the City was currently spending, plus the additional revenue from the increased Rossman fee. He and Ms. Hamerlynck reported to the Board what their research showed was the current status of natural-area-related spending and staffing. Chair Snell reported that over the years since it had been created the Natural Resource Coordinator position had been made responsible for reviewing development applications, until that responsibility currently took 90% of Ms. Hamerlynck's time. Ms. Hamerlynck reported that the Parks and Recreation Department budget funded a half time, natural area maintenance position that had been vacant for six months, and a Park Ranger position that was responsible for watching parks and natural areas at night and weekends. She cautioned that the AmeriCorp position, which cost the City \$6,000 per year, might not be offered to the City in future years.

Chair Snell proposed that the NRAB recommend that the Budget Committee adequately fund an Open Space/Natural Areas Management Program. He explained that his strategy would be to recommend that the first priority of the Natural Resource Coordinator position (to be known as, "Open Space/Natural Areas Coordinator") was to be Open Space/Natural Area management. Chair Snell said there would also be a Parks Maintenance position, to be filled by someone who was able to distinguish between native and non-native, invasive species, and visit natural areas with a backpack sprayer to kill the undesirable species. His proposal suggested a budget for contracted labor and services, and a budget for funding organized volunteer group projects. He said that the Park Ranger position should not be part of the Open Space/Natural Area maintenance budget. He clarified that the budget category should be referred to as the "Open Space/Natural Area" budget because the golf course and cemeteries were also categorized as "Open Space." He emphasized that the budget was to be specifically focused on natural area management, and primarily for managing non-native, invasive plants.

*Ms. Asby then joined the meeting. Chair Snell observed there was a quorum.

Chair Snell suggested the NRAB submit their recommendation early enough that it could be inserted in the "Issues and Options" report that the City Manager attached to each proposed budget. He suggested the Board members plan to attend Budget hearings. Chair Snell said if the Board agreed to recommend the budget he proposed, he would finalize the draft in the following few days.

Ms. Hamerlynck explained that her report combined two tables from Chair Snell's draft recommendation into a comparison table that compared the current and previous budgets with one that could be adopted for the 2005/2006 fiscal year that related to his proposed strategy. The Natural Resources Coordinator position would be shifted from the Planning Department to the Parks and Recreation Department. She noted that Chair Snell's proposal would make the natural area maintenance position, which was currently funded as a half-time position, a full time position. She confirmed that the AmeriCorp position cost the City \$6,000, and that although the City Council seemed to want to keep it, there was no guarantee the position would be there next year. Ms. Hamerlynck explained that she estimated that if the City hired a natural areas volunteer coordinator, it would cost the same as the cost of the library volunteer coordinator. She advised that although the new fiscal year began on July 1, the current AmeriCorp representative would continue to work in the City until the end of the year. She said that if the City decided to have a full time volunteer coordinator on staff, it would probably cost the City \$55,000 to pay an entry-level professional in that position a salary of \$25,000 to 30,000. She advised the proposed program also needed a manager to oversee it. She reported that there was currently \$37,000 budgeted for Parks Maintenance Materials and Service; that money paid for tree removal and small projects; and it was typically spent halfway through the year. She reported that there was a Maintenance Department manager position that supervised a five-person staff that worked in the Open Spaces and parks and took care of trees. She said she had revised

Chair Snell's budget to show a budgeted amount for maintenance, and another budgeted amount for funding volunteer group projects. She agreed with Chair Snell that it made sense to remove Park Ranger position funding from the Open Space/Natural Area budget. She clarified that although she spent 10% of her time in 2004/2005 working with the Parks and Recreation Department, the entire cost of the Natural Resource Coordinator position was currently paid for by the Planning Department. Chair Snell emphasized that position should not be connected to the Planning Department, because it had originally been created to manage Open Space, and not to accomplish planning functions. Ms. Hamerlynck summarized that according to her estimates, the cost to the City to adopt the proposed strategy and budget would be the same as it currently spent, plus the cost to the Planning Department to replace her functions there, if her position were moved to the Parks and Recreation Department. Chair Snell cautioned that the additional revenue from Rossman fees should not be allocated to the Planning Department. Ms. Hamerlynck related that she had found that AmeriCorp would allow the City to keep an AmeriCorps volunteer in service in the City if the City adopted and sustained any new program created by the AmeriCorp person, and if the AmeriCorp representative was then allowed to move on to create another new program. She offered to continue to research and confirm accurate current budget amounts for Chair Snell to insert into his proposal. The Board members wondered how much money was in the Tree Mitigation Fund, which was where tree-removal penalties and developer contributions in lieu of mitigation were accounted for. They also observed the Neighborhood Grant Program no longer existed.

Ms. Gronowski moved to approve the conceptual direction presented by Chair Snell in his memorandum dated March 30, 2005, and his budget presentation to the Budget Committee. Vice Chair Roth seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote of all Board members present.

Willamette Riverfront Restoration Plan

The Board discussed a concept that the City would control all of the riparian area along the Willamette riverfront. Ms. Hamerlynck related that the Oswego Point Apartments maintained view corridors for their residents. When they applied for their annual permit last year she had suggested they consider working with the City to fashion a more comprehensive management plan for the area that could create larger view corridors for residents and allow the City to manage the riverfront. She reported that the City was close to controlling 95% of the riparian area along the City's portion of the Willamette River. Chair Snell envisioned the riparian wooded wetland that was in the southeast corner of Foothills and the adjacent portion of Roehr Park could be large trees with ground level vegetation, but little mid-level vegetation. He explained that would keep the views open there. He observed that emailed messages indicated there was some opposition to a riverfront restoration plan.

Foothills Redevelopment Plan update

Mr. Jones was not present to give this update.

Surface Water Management Plan Update

The Board discussed an emailed communication from Elizabeth Papadopoulos. Chair Snell expressed his concern that staff seemed too inclined to rely on direction from the consultant. He said staff should take the lead and encourage more public involvement.

Tryon Creek Culvert Update

The Board discussed the Tryon Creek culvert. Ms. Hamerlynck reported that ODOT planned to re-engineer the design of the culvert and rebuild it this summer. She reported that the City had a \$30,000 grant to restore that stretch of the creek. She confirmed the existing house had been removed. She confirmed for Chair Snell that the top of the south edge of the channel was mostly bedrock, and not fill. She clarified the channel was not going to be re-routed, but the bank on the south side might be graded to make it less precipitous.

New Board Member Update

Ms. Hamerlynck reported that one person had officially applied for the open board position, and others had expressed interest and might apply.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

Springbrook Management Plan

The Board agreed to discuss the Springbrook Management Plan at their next meeting.

Fire Hazard Issue

The board discussed the danger of fire hazard from wild fires. They recalled that some people believed that planting English ivy would help prevent fires. Chair Snell advised that ivy and clematis created a “ladder” of fuel for fire. The group acknowledged that homeowners needed to be educated about fire hazards and they should think about what they could do around their homes to inhibit spread of fire.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, April 20, 2005. There being no further business Chair Snell adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Hamerlynck

Lisa Hamerlynck
Natural Resources Coordinator