



**PORTLAND PARKS BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

**January 6, 2016**

**8:00 – 9:30 a.m.**

**Lovejoy Room, City Hall**

**Board members present:** Tonya Booker, Judy Bluehorse Skelton, Patricia Frobos, Dion Jordan, Andy Nelson, Jim Owens, Meryl Redisch, Linda Robinson, Gladys Ruiz, Sue Van Brocklin,

**Board members absent:** Jeff Anderson, Kendall Clawson, Kathy Fong Stephens, Ian Jaquiss, Tony Magliano, Christa Stout, Julie Vigeland

**PP&R Staff present:** Mike Abbaté, Eileen Argentina, Margaret Evans, Art Hendricks, Warren Jimenez, Kia Selley, Jeff Shaffer

**Call to order** Judy Bluehorse Skelton called the meeting to order at 8:10.

**Park of the Month** Gladys just returned from trip to New York, and did not get a chance to visit Piccolo Park, park of the month for December.

Hillside Community Center will be Park of the month for January. Mike Abbaté noted that PP&R just did a large maintenance project there. The Community Center sits on a hillside, and has had huge drainage and leakage issues. There are no leakage problems now. Four years ago, Mike noted, it was a cut package and we worked with neighbors to keep it open. It is now completely self-supported.

**Commissioner's Update** Mike introduced Pooja Bhatt, the new liaison to Parks & Recreation from the Commissioner's office. Pooja noted that she is really happy to be here. She has been working for Commissioner Fritz for 2 ½ weeks, and is excited to be the liaison to parks. She noted that she will leave cards, and Board members should feel free to reach out to her. Linda Robinson asked about Patti Howard, and Mike confirmed that Patti left at the end of the month. Tim is now Chief of Staff and will continue on some important issues, such as labor and title II.

**Public Testimony** James Krier gave public testimony on drones. He said that he really appreciates the opportunity to speak to the Board. He is a drone photography enthusiast. Mr. Krier encouraged Board members to view photographs that have been taken with drone technology, including a New York Times Magazine travel piece. In Portland, the Oregonian used drone photography to show what the city was experiencing during the recent storms. He noted that drone photography should be protected free speech. With drone photography, photographers are using it to capture ideas and share with an audience. He discussed concerns related to safety, noting that it is hard to find recreation that is safer than drones. He argued that bicycles, boating, dog bites, and other recreational activities have far more safety risks than drone photography.

The FDA has come out with a fact sheet for local governments, which demonstrates skepticism for local governments to regulate air space.

Judy Bluehorse Skelton said that the National Park Service has a temporary ban on drones. James noted that National Forest Service allows.

Mike Abbaté noted that PP&R has a policy about unmanned aircraft. He added that this policy has been around for 20 years, and didn't anticipate drones. It will need to be updated. He said that either in February or March, the Parks Board will have a discussion, and put together a committee to look at this issue.

Mike asked James Krier about the new regulations issued by the FAA. James said that regulations for model airplanes haven't changed much. In his opinion, a lot of municipalities have adopted draconian policies. One town in Minnesota has a law banning drones, and that violators are charged with a misdemeanor for the first offense, and felony for the second offense.

Mike told Mr. Krier that we will reach out to him when the Parks Board has put together a committee for further review.

**Approval of the Minutes** Jim Owens moved to pass the December meeting minutes, Patricia Frobes seconded, and the board passed minutes with Tonya Booker abstaining.

**Chair Updates** Judy did not have any chair updates.

Jeff Anderson was absent, so there was no Parks Foundation update.

The Equity Subcommittee will meet later this month, and will report out in February.

**Urban Forestry Commission** Meryl Redisch thanked the Board for the opportunity to report on proposed changes to the administrative rule for Title 11.

Next Thursday, Meryl noted that proposals will be coming from Commissioners Fritz and Saltzman.

As background, Meryl noted that City Council and Mayor approved a new tree code in 2011, and it was funded in the 14 and 15 budgets. The new Tree Code went into effect January 2015. Almost immediately after, an administrative rule was created through Comm. Fritz's office and the Bureau of Development Services to clarify replanting and mitigation fees for the removal of large trees. This administrative rule was an attempt to increase equity, which is laudable. But, Meryl noted, what the rule did was make things more difficult. It capped mitigation fees at \$1200 regardless of size, and specimen. The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) and advocates submitted numerous letters. Urban Forestry and the Urban Forestry Commission was not involved in drafting the new administrative rule. Simultaneous to the new rule being presented, there was a stakeholder meeting. An advisory committee that included advocates, staff, arborists and developers, convened. The idea in my opinion of an oversight committee, Meryl added, should be looking at pros and flaws. Because of the administrative rule, that committee was sidetracked, and sidelined dealing with the administrative rule.

Externally, Meryl added, what you are probably all aware of was outrage over big

trees being cut down when small houses were being demolished to put in large buildings that took up entire lots. Meryl discussed the giant Sequoias in Eastmoreland, noting that neighbors wanted Parks to purchase the property to save the trees, which would be poor public policy in her opinion. She added that this group (Eastmoreland neighbors), because they had ability, were able to purchase the land and save the trees.

Meryl noted that advocates are concerned that we are losing big healthy trees at an alarming rate. We haven't had time for the tree code to work itself out. We are collecting data on permits both in development and non-development situations. One of the things the tree code did was regulate trees on private property. Five or six years ago, we were on the depth of recession, no one was developing anything and we didn't look ahead to see how we would lose our urban canopy.

Meryl said that both proposals have merit, both have flaws. Each proposal has a threshold for protecting large trees. One is just over 48 inches, and the other is 50. Meryl noted that less than 2 percent of the City's trees are over 48 inches, so the thresholds are meaningless. The UFC and advocates are concerned about those trees between 20 and 35 inches. The Commission has 2 new members. One is a scientist from PSU, Vivek Shandas. The other is David Diaz, forest ecologist from Ecotrust. Both are looking at maps, permits, and taking a critical look at what has happened over the last 10 months to come up with strong visual evidence of what the projected outcome is if we continue down this path. What are some ideas and concepts for protecting large trees that are considerably less than 48 or 50 inches in diameter? We realize we have to start somewhere. We have to look at the species of tree, the health, where it is in the landscape.

Meryl said that she is asking the Board for their support. The UFC is proposing, and has submitted comments that asks for the following:

- 30 day public notice when large trees are going to be cut down (the current proposals ask for 7 days)
- Mitigation fee to be raised to cover the full value of loss of tree
- In non-development situation, you can't go the next day after approval to say you are developing your site
- Reinstate City Forester's discrepancy and authority for urban forestry management.

Meryl added that the UFC has submitted these comments to the Mayor and City Council, and will testify and hold hearing for the public. In February, the City Council will hear proposals. We want more time, working period to look at the data and strengthen ability to protect the large trees.

Linda Robinson asked for the schedule of meetings and hearings. Meryl said that next Tuesday (1/12/16) at 12:30, the Planning and Sustainability Commission will be holding a public hearing. On the following Thursday, 1/21/16, UFC will hold a hearing. In February, City Council and Mayor will hear recommendations\*\*.

\*\* (Council date has now been set for March 3<sup>rd</sup>).

Mike noted that the proposal coming through Commissioner Fritz is a stop gap measure. In response to a big push in summer and fall, when big trees were being proposed to remove, Commissioner Fritz asked staff to get something in quickly, and to look at possible other code changes to title 11. Those revisions will be a substantial piece of work. We will have an add package asking Council for staffing to do that work on title 11. The proposals next week are both short term measures to protect large trees.

Meryl added that the proposal coming from Commissioner Fritz is much better than the BDS proposal.

Warren noted that from the policy front, if you can talk about that funding piece, we are positioned better to move forward.

Jim Owens asked if you are talking about controversy related to removal for redevelopment. Wasn't there controversy for tree care with non-development situations, costs associated with trimming?

Mike noted that the distinction would be that in development situations, I'm putting up a new building. In non-development situations, I have a large tree on my property that I want to take out.

Jim asked to clarify that the code amendments up for review are not for non-development situations.

Meryl said that they are looking at both, noting that currently a homeowner can take out 4 or 5 trees up to 20 inches in diameter from their property. That's close to 80 inches in diameter total from the urban canopy.

Tonya Booker thanked Meryl for the summary. She asked, if we are unable to attend the meetings, what else can we do to support the UFC? Meryl said that it would be great if the Parks Board could submit a letter, noting that she could provide that letter. On the Audubon website, there are bullet points for submitting a letter.

Andy Nelson said that in all fairness, we should probably look at the rationale on the other side. He added that he doesn't know what the impact on development would be, and thinks we should look at that as a group. There must be organized support for leaving the code the way that it is.

Mike said that he could have Jenn Cairo, the City Forester, attend the February meeting. She could speak to both sides of the issue. We've been to development review committee. Andy noted that it will be good to have an even handed look at the issue.

Mike said that Megan will send out a draft letter (from Meryl) for review, and Parks Board members should identify questions they have. We'll have Jenn and Meryl at the February meeting to answer questions. They know both sides.

**Reorganization** Mike updated the Board on the PP&R reorganization. We announced the Reorg in November, and are moving forward with implementation. Mike noted that he hasn't talked in great detail about what is driving the change. There were four key themes that brought him to the conclusion that we need to reorganize. Internally, from a work load perspectives, we have 4 departments, Eileen leads services department (225 staff), we have Kia leading asset management (100 staff), City nature has about 80 staff, Warren leads Director's office support (70 staff). All day to day operations in parks is organized under Eileen – that was created to create synergy between folks in community centers and people who manage parks.

As there has been an elevation on recreation, and support, Eileen has lead recreation revolution. In Mike's opinion that has been very successful, and would be more successful if she could focus on that entirely. He believes recreation should be able to stand alone.

On the other hand we have City Nature. Laudable objective – take natural resources and elevate. This was buried in the organization 7 or 8 years ago. Zari (Santner) felt it needed prominence, and elevated it. Since then, City Nature has hired ecologists and botanical specialists, and our workforce is better now because of City Nature. Instead of looking at developed parks as separate from natural areas, Mike noted that he sees the land as a spectrum. On one side, we have Riverview with interior streams we are protecting, and on the other side, look at Delta Park where there is very little natural area, and it is highly developed. Whether we are looking at developed parks, or natural areas, Mike would like our ecologists and horticulturalists to look at the function of all of our lands.

The fourth key point is to give Art Hendricks staffing related to equity. For two years in a row, we have asked Council to give funding for equity programs. We had to reallocate other funds to create Art's position. This will move some positions into Art's group. Parks for new Portlanders, external advisory committees, internal diversity and equity committee, and fostering equity support team, and outreach.

The Support Services division is essentially the same as Director's office today Kia's group will essentially stay the same, but turf techs will be moved into land stewardship. Recreation services will be under Eileen. The Urban Forestry team has been absolutely stretched, they need Mike's support, so he is having Urban Forestry report directly to him. It is currently under City Nature, and he wants to give City Forester Jenn Cairo a high level of support.

We are creating a new opportunity for Arts, Culture and Special events. This new division will give us an opportunity to expand arts, and music programming. This falls on heels of two of our biggest groups, Multnomah Arts Center and Community Music Center; both have boards and are looking to expand to East Portland.

Those are the key values in reorganization – it is not about downsizing. It will better align our resources. There will be no positions lost, no people will lose jobs. Mike noted that he is happy to answer questions. We are moving forward. Warren Jimenez's primary responsibility will be to work on implementation. About 12 people will have new jobs, 20 will have new bosses, and a handful will have new work locations. It's really about realigning.

Meryl asked about the status for Land Stewardship Division Manager.

Mike said we've done a recruitment. We had about 60 applicants from all over the country, and he was pleased with the pool. We will be interviewing eight in the first round of interviews, which will be next week. Under the land stewardship division, there will be a new position for an eastside lands manager, and we will be posting a recruitment for that. The West Zones manager will be Astrid.

Sue Glenn was the North Zone manager, she has accepted a job in Bend. Great for Bend, bad for us. We will be doing a recruitment. She was going to lead arts, culture, and special events.

Pat Frobbs noted that one zone manager function was to serve as liaison to community groups. Mike said that this has been one of the biggest comments and concerns expressed. He noted that zone managers are not the only liaison to groups, some of our SMT members serve this role. Steve Pixley is liaison to Rail Heritage. We spread those relationships throughout the bureau. Michele Rodriguez has created a list of all of our current partners, and current liaisons. They will all be assigned. We will have an event in March or April for those handoffs. They will still be primary relationships.

Gladys Ruiz asked for an overlay of the two org charts. Warren said that we do not have a chart that shows both current & future overlaid, but we can send the two org charts. He added that we have a lot of fact sheets, and would be happy to share them with you. Mike added that we will send some things out. If you have specific questions, feed through Megan and we can set up a meeting.

Linda noted that regarding liaisons with all these groups, for East Portland Parks Coalition, we have a fairly high level person. She added that the Bureau has lower level people sometimes with the neighborhood associations, and she would hope that when Mike assigns the person to a large group like EPPC, you would have a high level person, a similar level person. Warren said that our goal is continuity, some things may change, but our goal is to keep that high level of continuity.

Eileen noted that district level coalitions have been really effective for the Bureau, primary stakeholders that works for everyone. Not all neighborhood associations are identical. We hope to extend that model of parks coalitions.

**Employment  
Zoning**

Jim introduced Tom Armstrong from the Bureau of Planning & Sustainability, and said his analogy for where we are with Employment Zoning is a sports analogy – we are in the playoffs. We went through the first half, with the comp plan update. This Board has participated for the last 18 months or so. At our last meeting, the Board approved comments. Early implementation – one we have concerns about is employment zoning. We have shared our concerns about early versions of that project. We have some continuing concerns. Before we develop our final comments for planning and sustainability commission (the current arena), we want to give the Bureau of Planning & Sustainability (BPS) opportunity to talk.

Thanks to Tom Armstrong for coming this morning.

Tom Armstrong noted that the Employment Zoning Project implements a lot of the things coming around long range economic strategy, including a mandate from the state that we have an adequate supply of land to meet forecasted jobs for next 20 years. We have shortfalls of that capacity, primarily central east side, campuses and colleges, and industrial areas. The Employment Zoning Project primarily addresses industrial areas. There are new regional rules from Metro regarding regionally significant industrial areas, and that is what we are trying to implement and modify. This is coming out of the industrial land strategy – protect what we have, limit conversions to non-industrial uses. The new restrictions relate to regionally significant industrial areas, along Willamette, along Columbia Corridor, out to the Airport, north of Sandy Blvd. Metro was looking to protect industrial land to industrial uses, restrict entertainment, restrict commercial outdoor recreation (such as golf), and restrict parks. Tualatin rewrote to allow for trailheads. Most of the discussion has been around how the City will limit park uses. There has been an added prohibition on storage facilities. Planning and Sustainability has discussed a wide range of proposals over the last 9 months. The other exception in Metro title 4 is for parks to serve the local residents and employees. How we discuss this with Planning and Sustainability has been to focus on restricting active recreation parks that are designed to be city wide community serving. On the other side, you have habitat areas with trails, with public use as secondary to natural protection of habitat. Then you have small parks designed to serve the local community.

Where the Planning & Sustainability Commission (PSC) is at, active parks up to 2 acres are allowed outright. Anything more than 2 acres requires a comp plan amendment. We considered allowing larger local parks as a conditional use, considered up to 10 acres, in the end, they said the larger park facility needs to be a larger discussion with weighing competing goals of industrial jobs and park and recreation facilities. Riverplan north reach, we are limiting or prohibiting quasi-judicial amendments to map change. Any map change to prime industrial areas. PSC – bigger park facilities need a larger discussion. PSC is discussing map changes, including changing land that has been acquired by Parks and Metro and BES to open space. PSC will wrap up work in spring. City Council is wrapping up review in spring as well. There will be hearings in last spring or early summer. We can bring full range of options, threshold triggers, present wide range options to City Council to determine where they want to draw those lines.

Jim Owens asked Brett Horner to respond for PP&R.

Brett thanked the Planning & Sustainability bureau for working with us on this. He noted that we are at a significantly different spot than we started. A lot of the mitigation fees, and other restrictions that were, in our opinion, draconian pieces have been taken out. Brett noted that the votes at PCS have been really close. There has been a lot of debate, thought, and discussion. We have about 3 primary concerns. Metro language itself which initiated process. We would like the City to request Metro clarify language. Currently doesn't exempt natural areas. We have identified areas where there are existing homes that are not within ½ mile of a park. They may stay for quite a while, we would like to have freedom to put a park to serve those areas. Now – parks are allowed in any zone. We think that's good public policy. 2 acres would be allowed, but that might not be enough. Biggest

restriction would be the larger parks that serve a broader audience. Delta Park serves mostly Westside. We would like another delta park in NE, and that would require a comp plan amendment under the new regulations. Brett added that he is here to answer any questions.

Linda Robinson asked Tom Armstrong where the 2 acre figure came from, why not 2 ½ or 3. It seems smaller than most neighborhood parks.

Tom said that the number came out of Statewide policy. If you have a change of less than 2 acres it's minimal. The explored with planning commission if it was larger. If it was needed to serve the local community, and not bigger to serve citywide.

Mike Abbaté noted that one limitation is the acquisition of land. This is a part of town where there are not a lot of small parcels. If someone wanted to sell us 3 acres, we couldn't go after it, even if it would make a perfect size park.

Linda asked about the map, noting that she has seen that it covers the slough, it's over everything. In the narrative, e-zones and buffer areas are exempt, but she didn't see it in the code.

Tom said that in zoning you have the base zone, and then you overlay other zones. There are e-zones for natural areas, airport zones, prime industrial area overlays that govern what you can use the property for. It doesn't impact the e-zones. It affects what the property owner can use that for. With respect to the sloughs, if BES says it's stormwater or water quality than it is stormwater or water quality.

Linda asked what takes precedent?

Tom said that what takes precedent is the underlying or base zone. The C zones are development – if the base zone is industrial. What prime industrial overlay says is what you can use that building for, it can't be a concert venue, or entertainment zone, can't be a golf clubhouse. Unprotected natural areas out there will be a future process

Meryl Redisch asked if there is a number of how many people per acre would be employment worthy, and when those employment zones would be providing employment services. For example, a certain amount of jobs per acre, and those jobs would have to be within the next 5 years.

Tom said that they don't force or regulate the use. It's to create jobs, we don't have a minimum job density

Sue Van Brocklin said that she was curious to hear from Jim Owens. There are areas with existing residents without access to a park. She noted that she is interested in central eastside industrial. Looks like it's blocking all river access. That entire way, is that just going to become warehouses?

Tom Armstrong said that the central eastside is not included in the prime overlay area.

Brett added that the employment zoning will not affect central city

Tom said that it applies in Portland Harbor, and Columbia Corridor.

Jim Owens said he has remaining concerns about inability to create regional facilities. It will require working with the City and with Metro to see what our options are. With staff, refine position. This is an evolving game. Getting toward 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, and he noted it is time to shift from defense to offense.

Judy said that she really appreciate everyone's work. Tom for coming in, and Jim for guiding us. She added that the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter is always very exciting.

Mike Abbaté added that Commissioner Fritz is very engaged in this issue, and very interested in Parks Board comments.

Jim thanked Tom and his team for being open.

Judy added that we will just keep getting together and working.

**Director's Update** Mike noted that in 2016 there will be a new mayor, and a new election, with general election in November. During the last election cycle, the Parks Board invited candidates to come and address the Board. He asked if they would like to do that again, noting we will have to invite all. Parks Board members said yes. Mike asked if anyone would like to serve on a mini committee for questions or instructions for candidates. Jim Owens and Pat Frobes will serve.

Mike said that the next meeting on Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup> will be at the Community Music Center. If we have the Urban Forester coming, we may push drones or strategic plan to March.

**Meeting  
Adjourned** Judy adjourned the meeting.