

APPROVED MAY 22ND

**CITY OF EDMONDS
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

May 8, 2013

Chair Reed called the meeting of the Edmonds Planning Board to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5th Avenue North.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

John Reed, Chair
Valerie Stewart, Vice Chair
Todd Cloutier
Ian Duncan
Bill Ellis
Philip Lovell
Neil Tibbott

STAFF PRESENT

Carrie Hite, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director
Francis Chapin, Cultural Services Manager
Karin Noyes, Recorder

OTHERS PRESENT

Keeley O'Connell, Earthcorp

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Kevin Clarke (excused)

READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BOARD MEMBER CLOUTIER MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF APRIL 24, 2013 BE APPROVED AS AMENDED. BOARD MEMBER ELLIS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

No one in the audience indicated a desire to address the Board during this portion of the meeting.

PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES QUARTERLY REPORT

Ms. Hite advised that the Planning Board is also the Parks Board, and staff comes before them on a quarterly basis to present reports. She said Chair Reed specifically requested an update on the 4th Avenue Cultural Corridor Project and how it would be impacted by the recent changes to the BD zones, as well as more information about the Edmonds Marsh and the recently completed feasibility study. She noted that Ms. Chapin and Ms. O'Connell were both present to present portions of the update.

- **4th Avenue Cultural Corridor.** Ms. Chapin explained that the planning document that was completed in 2009 is a 15% level design, and the City has not located funding to move the project forward to the next level. She noted that engineering designs must be at least 60% complete in order for the City to be eligible for most funding options. Staff

will attempt to leverage a small amount of local utility funds for the project in conjunction with street reconstruction associated with water and sewer infrastructure improvements. She said it is estimated that full engineering plans will be about 10% to 15% of the total project costs, which are estimated to be between \$5 million and \$6 million. There are a variety of places to look for funding, and the Staff Report mentions potential funding sources. She said she has talked to the Department of Ecology about stormwater management funding and the Transportation Improvement District about transportation funding. While the area at the intersection of 4th Avenue and Main Street is eligible for this funding, it cannot be applied to the remainder of the project. She summarized that obtaining funding to reach 60 to 70% of engineering design, which is required for grant applications, is the City's the biggest hurdle at this time. The best option is a State Legislative appropriation, which would be in direct competition with other projects in the City.

Ms. Chapin pointed out that the recent changes to the BD zones do not apply to the BD5 zone, which is where the arts corridor is located. The current zoning in the BD5 zone already includes special conditions for the arts corridor. Some uses allowed in the other BD zones are not allowed in the BD5 zone such as commuter parking, large parking lots, and drive-through businesses. She summarized that the changes to the other BD zones would have no direct impact on the BD5 zone. Chair Reed noted that his initial inquiry was made before the Planning Board had acted on the proposed changes to the BD1 through BD4 zones, and he wanted to make sure there would be no impacts to the BD5 zone.

Board Member Lovell recalled that the plan adopted in 2009 outlined a design that would make the corridor pedestrian friendly. Ms. Chapin said the pedestrian-friendly concept proposed in the 2009 plan was endorsed by both the City Council and the public. Currently, the plan is at the 15% design level and can be used as a starting point for moving the design forward. However, it will be important to re-engage the public in the process to obtain additional feedback.

Board Member Lovell asked if the plan envisions the homes along 4th Avenue being sold and converted into artist studios, restaurants, etc. Ms. Chapin said there are some lovely homes along the corridor, and she presumes many will remain as residential uses. However, a number of the homes have already been converted to a mixture of uses, including both residential and commercial. She said she envisions these types of uses will continue. While it would not be mandated, the plan will likely encourage the mixed uses to be of the types that invite people to the corridor. Board Member Lovell asked if the property owners along 4th Avenue have a clear understanding of what has been proposed and how their properties will be impacted. Ms. Chapin said residents along the corridor contact her frequently for updates. Most like living there and believe that implementation of the plan will improve the area. They support the concept of creating a pedestrian-friendly corridor that is visually more interesting. A linear type park also appeals to the residents.

Chair Reed pointed out that design costs for the project are estimated to be between \$600,000 and \$900,000. Ms. Chapin said this is a conservative estimate to complete the design work. However, she noted that it will become easier for the City to obtain funding once designs have been completed to at least the 60% level. Chair Reed asked if the project could be phased. Ms. Chapin answered that the project could be phased, but it would be more economical to do it all at once.

- **Edmonds Downtown Cultural Heritage Tour.** Ms. Chapin recalled that the study recommended that the City integrate interpretive signage to highlight historic elements of the corridor. This recommendation is being implemented with a matching grant from Preserve America for the Downtown Cultural Heritage Tour. She provided an example sign and explained that the signage format presents historic information within a stage proscenium design. All of the signs placed along the corridor can be relocated if necessary when the remainder of the 4th Avenue Corridor Project moves forward.
- **SR 99 International District Enhancement Project.** Ms. Chapin reported that construction is underway to complete the installation of eight pedestrian lights on the west side of SR 99. In addition, new concrete and a decorative sculptural element will be added to the island at 76th Street. Banner signage on both sides of the street will complete the project, which should be finished by late June.
- **Flower Basket Poles.** Ms. Chapin announced that a total of 21 flower basket poles have been installed. Four new poles will be installed as part of the Main Street Project, and five additional poles are scheduled to be installed before the end of 2013. She encouraged the Board Members to take note of the new poles, particularly those on the new portion of Main Street.

- **Edmonds Marsh.** Ms. Hite advised that the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department is working jointly with the Public Works Department to complete a feasibility study of the Edmonds Marsh and to address the flooding problems that exist at the intersection of Dayton Street and SR-104. The City recently contracted with Earthcorp (formerly People for Puget Sound) to be project manager for the Edmonds Marsh rehabilitation efforts. Jerry Shuster will internally manage the stormwater portion of the project. She noted that the work is being done simultaneously as each will have an impact on the other.

Keeley O'Connell, Earthcorp, said she was scheduled to make a presentation on the findings of the feasibility study to the City Council on May 7th, but the presentation was delayed due to technical difficulties. The Planning Board is the first group to review the findings. She said the official name for the project is "Edmonds Marsh Restoration," and a major goal of the effort is daylighting Willow Creek, which means taking part of a stream that is currently in an enclosed pipe and creating an open-air stream channel instead. Daylighting will improve connection between Puget Sound and the Edmonds Marsh, creating more saltwater marsh closer to its original ecosystem. This will be better for salmon, birds and other wildlife. Daylighting will also result in lower water levels at low tide, which may help address the flooding problem.

Ms. O'Connell explained that both Willow and Shellabarger Creeks flow into the marsh. She provided a map outlining the current creek channels, noting that because sediment plugs the pipes, many of the Willow Creek and Shellabarger Creek channels are undefined and a significant amount of water never reaches the marsh. This has resulted in flooding problems at Dayton Street and SR 104. She particularly pointed out the portions of Willow Creek that are and are not daylighted. She noted that the outlet for Willow Creek is also deeper than most salmon will use since they like to hang out along the shoreline. There has been no evidence of salmon returning to the marsh for spawning since mid 2000 when the pipe was installed further out into the water. However, healthy cut throat trout and salmon have been found throughout Willow Creek. Ms. O'Connell also provided a map to illustrate the current location of the City's stormwater infrastructure near the marsh.

Board Member Lovell suggested that, other than providing a way for the fish to cross the state highway, the problem is really a Public Works stormwater issue. Ms. Hite agreed and said that is why the Public Works and Parks Departments are working together. Currently, the culverts are full of sedimentation and the amount of water that does flow into the marsh cannot be absorbed because of excessive sediment. Instead, the water flows down SR 104 and causes flooding at Dayton Street. Bringing the sediment rate down and removing invasive species would allow the creeks to flow more freely and the marsh to naturally absorb the stormwater. It is anticipated that these improvements would bring salmon back to the marsh, as well.

Ms. O'Connell pointed out that there is no visible creek bed where the two creeks enter into the marsh because there is very little elevation change and the area is covered with cattails, which are considered an invasive species. The proposed preferred alternative calls for excavating the creek channels to improve salmon habitat. She summarized that while the stormwater and creek issues are separate, they are also tied together. In addition to quantity, the quality of the stormwater water must be addressed if they want to improve habitat for fish and wildlife. They must also keep in mind that properly-functioning marshes are amazing at absorbing pollutants and converting them into less toxic and non-toxic elements. Currently, the marsh does not function at the level needed to deal with the amount of stormwater that could potentially come in. In addition, it is important to study the stormwater runoff to know what pollutants it currently contains. She summarized that, at this time, water runs off of impervious surfaces and goes directly into Puget Sound. A functioning marsh can handle a certain amount of pollutants and result in cleaner water being discharged into Puget Sound. This will improve the habitat for both salmon and birds.

Board Member Lovell questioned whether the critical goal is to correct drainage problems or save the marsh or creeks. Ms. O'Connell suggested that it would be difficult to do one project without the other if the City continues to allow stormwater to flow into the marsh. She emphasized that a marsh system can be an amazing sponge. With projected sea level rise and climate change, more water will flow through the creeks, and it will need to go somewhere. There will need to be an engineered system to take care of this problem. Board Member Lovell summarized that the system must work both economically and from an engineering standpoint.

Ms. O'Connell explained that the feasibility study was funded by a grant from the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) through the Salmon Recovery Board. The grant required that the emphasis of the study be on improving habitat for Chinook Salmon, which are listed on the Endangered Species List. The purpose of the study is to look for opportunities for Chinook Salmon to access the habitat again and be able to spawn. However, she noted that Coho Salmon have historically been spotted in Shellabarger and Willow Creeks, as well. The stormwater concerns and other issues going on with the system can be tied into the feasibility study, but the emphasis must remain on improving habitat for Chinook Salmon.

Ms. O'Connell reviewed that the feasibility study first got traction when the Environmental Impact Statement was prepared for the Edmonds Crossing Project. The study identified daylighting Willow Creek as potential mitigation. In addition, the City required that two bridges (bottomless culverts) be installed as part of Sound Transit's Sounder Project with Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) to accommodate future daylighting of Willow Creek. The culverts were installed and provided needed environmental mitigation for filling of wetlands further north. The culverts have a 33-foot span, which is the optimal size for an urban creek, and allow water to flow underneath the tracks.

Again, Ms. O'Connell summarized that because the study was funded by a grant from the RCO through the Salmon Recovery Board, the primary focus of the study was to explore the feasibility of providing and maximizing Chinook Salmon access to rearing habitat in the Edmonds Marsh. A secondary focus was keeping marsh levels lower during storm events to help address flooding issues.

Ms. O'Connell said the studies show that juvenile Chinook will travel to the marsh from as far away as the Cedar and Snohomish Rivers because the marsh is the only barrier estuary of any size remaining between Everett and Seattle, and there is only one between Seattle and Tacoma. This is a rare habitat that must be protected. She provided a historic overlay showing that the marsh was over 100 acres at one time. It is called an estuary because it is protected by a sand spit and has freshwater influence. Most likely, all species of Chinook Salmon were found in the marsh historically. She reviewed the goals of the feasibility study as follows:

- Document existing conditions and identify the best opportunities for fish to find and migrate successfully in and out of the marsh system.
- Evaluate alternatives.
- Develop a conceptual plan.
- Perform hydrodynamic modeling
- Assess the biological and fish response to a system of this type and determine if fish could successfully travel to and from the marsh.
- Provide recommendations for the next phase of the project.

Ms. O'Connell reported that the consultant conducted an analysis of the following three alternatives:

1. Relocating a portion of Willow Creek to the north. The majority of the creek would still have to be in a pipe because of infrastructure and property ownership.
2. Relocating a portion of Willow Creek to flow through the Port of Edmonds Marina. This would be a much shorter trip for the salmon, but it would be a costly option given current infrastructure and property ownership. In addition, salmon are olfactory driven. If they cannot smell, they cannot find where they are going. There are too many smells in the marina, and juvenile salmon would likely become disoriented and be unable to find the correct opening. In addition, the Port's Executive Director has indicated that the Port would not be in favor of the alternative as it would require significant dredging in the marina to remove sediment.
3. Extend the existing channel underneath the bottomless culverts and come out across the beach. However, they would need to address impacts to the Dog Park, and Marina Beach Park. In addition, there is likely contaminated soil under a parking area that will need to be dealt with.

Ms. O'Connell said Alternative 3 is the preferred approach identified in the study. This involves moving the existing channel into a daylighted channel on the property currently owned by Chevron. The channel would flow under the railroad tracks via the bottomless culverts, and then flow across the beach. The study calls for a pedestrian bridge to ensure there is always access across the creek channel.

Chair Reed asked if the implementation of the preferred alternative would have an impact if the City were to resurrect the Edmonds Crossing Plan at some point in the future. Ms. O'Connell pointed out that daylighting Willow Creek was part of the Edmonds Crossing Plan, but the alignment would have been different. The alignment in the Edmonds Crossing Plan was better because it did not require the channel to meander. He reminded the Board that no construction can occur until the City obtains support from all impacted property owners, which includes both Chevron and the Washington State Department of Transportation. In addition, the state would not likely provide funding unless the City can show that real estate issues can be addressed.

Ms. O'Connell reviewed the biological benefits of daylighting Willow Creek. She explained that if juvenile fish enter the channel early in the tidal cycle, they would have access to the marsh up to 60% of the time. If fish enter later in the flood tidal cycle, their access would be limited starting one to two hours after high slack tide. However, residency in the marsh and upper creeks would be possible between tidal cycles if the channels are excavated and the habitat value above the salt marsh area is improved. Opportunities for residency would be better for juvenile fish because it would expand their feeding time. She emphasized that increasing connectivity to Puget Sound from the daylighted channel does not appear to increase and may actually reduce flood water surface elevations. She provided a chart that compares water for the existing and proposed conditions to the storm event that occurred in 2007. Modeling shows that flood events would be reduced because water would be allowed to leave the marsh at a faster rate via Shellabarger and Willow Creek.

Ms. O'Connell said the feasibility study concluded that it is feasible to daylight Willow Creek. Daylighting would provide a biological benefit and probably a hydrologic benefit as well. The study recommends the following:

- Additional data to calibrate the model before it goes into design work.
- Evaluate the need for a self-regulating tide gate rather than a manual tide gate.
- Evaluate whether or not modifications to the existing bridges installed by BNSF are needed to optimize the project.
- Determine the optimum biological and hydraulic alignment through the beach.
- Work on real estate issues.
- Move forward with more preliminary design. Once design reaches 60%, the City can proceed into the permitting process.

Ms. O'Connell advised that the total cost of the project is estimated to be \$4.35 million, and roughly \$1.1 million will be needed to complete the final feasibility study, engineering design and permitting process. The City has applied to the RCO for a \$315,441 grant, with \$225,051 in secured match for the final feasibility and preliminary engineering design work. She noted that the projected costs are in line with other large projects that have occurred along Puget Sound, and this project is located in a much more urban context than many others that have been done to date. Like other City projects, the City will need to find funding for the project from several different sources including state and federal grants, stormwater funds, and philanthropic donations.

Board Member Lovell commended Ms. O'Connell for her great work and commented that the project is very exciting. He observed that given the significance of the location relative to other access to fresh water for the salmon, it seems the state would be very interested in funding the project. Ms. O'Connell explained that there is no other Chinook habitat in the area, and fish must swim 8 miles from the Cedar River or 15 miles from the Snohomish River to reach the marsh. The state must look at all watersheds from the headwaters of the Cascades to Puget Sound and figure out what will make the biggest difference for Chinook Salmon. The marsh is a gem of an opportunity but it is in the "middle of nowhere" in the eyes of a Chinook.

Board Member Lovell said he serves on the Sound Transit Citizens Oversight Panel and he has not heard anything that would lead him to believe that Sound Transit is paying for the second track in Edmonds. Ms. O'Connell said she met years ago with representatives from Sound Transit to discuss mitigation for the second track. At that time, she was told that Sound Transit would pay for both the project and the required mitigation. She said she has a copy of the agreement between Sound Transit and BNSF, which calls for the two bottomless culverts as mitigation. In addition, the City's Stormwater Manager recently made contact with a representative at Sound Transit and obtained a letter of support for the City's request for state funding for the next phase of project. They have agreed to keep a look out for mitigation

opportunities in highly urban stretches in the areas where the double tracking will be located. The two bottomless culverts were a result of required mitigation for the stretch of track between Everett and Edmonds, and Sound Transit funded the project.

Vice Chair Stewart commented that the report shows promise and optimism in restoring the ecological functions of the marsh and using it to address stormwater issues. She asked if Ms. O'Connell has contacted the tribes as a potential funding source. She also suggested that opportunities for philanthropic funding could increase as the public indicates support for the vision contained in the plan. Ms. O'Connell said the Tulalip Tribe is aware of the project and their fisheries biologist has reviewed the report and provided additional information and data.

Board Member Ellis asked if the project would improve channeling on Shellabarger Creek, as well, to improve the flow under SR 104. Ms. O'Connell answered that the study did not address improving the flow under SR 104 because it is being addressed as part of the City's stormwater study. The two projects will move forward simultaneously. The next step is to merge the results of the two studies and likely propose a new channel for both Shellabarger Creek and Willow Creek through the cattail area.

Board Member Ellis asked if the study addresses how the plan would impact the shoreline jurisdiction in the area of the marsh. Ms. O'Connell said that based on the inundation model, the patterns would not be altered so much that the wetland boundaries identified in the Shoreline Master Program would change significantly. He said the plan has been reviewed by Planning staff, as well as representatives from the Port of Edmonds.

Board Member Tibbott asked if the City has considered including visitor and/or educational features as part of the project through a public/private partnership. He commented that this could be a fascinating way to establish a partnership with a corporation to restore and create a legacy of sustainability in the area. Ms. O'Connell agreed and suggested that the improving the hatchery could be a great place to start. Encouraging people to interact in the area in positive ways could also help reduce vandalism. She recalled that she participated on the Harbor Square Steering Committee as a representative of Friends of the Edmonds Marsh. The steering committee visited an educational opportunity at IslandWood on Bainbridge Island. They are overcapacity and cannot handle all of the school groups that want to participate in their programs. She reminded the Board that the Port was considering a type of educational center as part of their redevelopment plan. She also pointed out that part of the vision of Friends of the Edmonds Marsh is to have a connected boardwalk through the marsh. There are good examples of low-impact boardwalk systems that would be appropriate for the habitat. It is important to recognize that the marsh is located in an urban environment and there will be impacts. However, the impacts can be directed so that people are engaged in the area. She noted that the Harbor Square and Safeway sites will eventually be redeveloped, and they need to meld the new development with the marsh, the downtown, the cultural arts corridor, Marina Beach Park, the Port of Edmonds, etc.

Ms. Hite commented that the City is fortunate to have the opportunity to utilize Ms. O'Connell's energy and passion about the marsh.

- **Yost Pool.** Ms. Hite reported that while money was set aside in 2012 to replace the boiler at Yost Pool, it was reallocated to more urgent repairs. Staff is hopeful the boiler can be replaced this year.
- **Underwater Park.** Ms. Hite said there has been a recent effort in the community to pay tribute to some of the early founders of the Underwater Park. Staff is working with several citizens to identify other individuals who should be included. They will likely place a plaque near the dive park to commemorate their work.

Board Member Lovell asked if the City has been able to resolve issues related to the mismatched floats. Ms. Hite said staff is working with Bruce Higgins, the all star volunteer, to replace the floats with underwater line that still allows for navigation of the channels. About 25 to 30 floats have been removed, and the City has not received any additional complaints from citizens. She pointed out that replacing all the floats will be a costly project, but it is something the City will keep in mind as a potential future project.

- **City Park.** Ms. Hite announced that work on the City Park project, which will introduce a water spray play element and replace aged play structures, is moving forward. Staff will approach the City Council next week with a request to award

a bid for construction and project management. The City received a \$500,000 grant from the State, and they are applying for local funds to put together the \$1.3 million needed to complete the project. A survey and wetland delineation is required and will be completed within the next few weeks.

- **Park Impact Fees.** Ms. Hite advised that the City contracted with Randy Young and Associates to complete a Park Impact Fee Study for Edmonds. The study was presented to the City Council on April 23rd, and staff is currently awaiting their feedback. A follow up meeting with the City Council will be scheduled for next month.
- **Dayton Street Project.** Ms. Hite reported that this project is on schedule for completion in the fall of 2013.
- **Former Woodway High School Development.** Ms. Hite recalled that staff continues to meet with the Edmonds School District to discuss the potential redevelopment of the former Woodway High School site into four, full-sized soccer fields. Both the School District and the City have set aside some funding for the project, and they have submitted applications for grant funding several times. The project is still in process, and the City will approach the Legislature again this year with a request for a \$1 million grant to help fund the project. A local representative has expressed interest in the project and will tour the site next week. The estimated cost of the entire project is \$11 million, and \$4.1 million will be need to complete phase 1.
- **SR 104 Mini Park.** At the request of the Planning/Parks Board, the City will initiate a park naming opportunity for SR 104 Mini Park on May 9th. After the naming opportunity closes on May 30th, staff will forward all suggested names to the Planning Board. The Planning Board may establish a subcommittee to review the names and bring forward a short list or a recommended list for the Commission's review and discussion. Another option would be for the Board to review the entire list as a group. In either case, the Planning Board will conduct a public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council.

Chair Reed recalled that, in previous park naming processes, the Board formed a subcommittee to review the proposed names and narrow the list down to three for the Board's consideration. The Board reviewed the names, conducted a public hearing, and forwarded a recommendation to the City Council.

Vice Chair Stewart referred to information she forwarded to staff regarding "park naming rights." She explained that some jurisdictions have a policy for naming rights if a certain percentage of a project is funded by an individual, corporation, etc. She asked Ms. Hite to share her thoughts about implementing this type of program in Edmonds as a way to fund park projects and to honor those who provide significant funding. Ms. Hite reminded the Board that there was considerable deliberation on the Board and City Council during the naming process for the Hazel Miller Plaza. She agreed to provide additional information and a potential recommendation for the Planning Board's future consideration. She summarized that there are numerous opportunities for park revenue, such as park naming, park foundations, and public/private partnerships. The Board agreed it would be appropriate to consider these options, and they also agreed to review the park naming policy to determine if changes are necessary.

Board Members Tibbott, Cloutier and Duncan agreed to serve on the subcommittee to review the list of proposed names for the SR 104 Mini Park and forward a recommendation to the Board for further discussion and a public hearing prior to formulating a recommendation for the City Council. Board Member Ellis observed that the SR 104 Mini Park is primarily used by WSDOT customers. He suggested that the City approach them for funding support.

- **Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (PROS).** Ms. Hite explained that the PROS Plan is the guiding document for the City of Edmonds to plan, develop and maintain park, recreation and open space for its citizens. The document is required by the Growth Management Act, and is a precursor for competing and qualifying for state and federal grant funds. As mandated by the state, the current plan must be updated by May of 2014. Vice Chair Stewart participated on a selection committee that reviewed the consultant applications and interviewed the top three. Based on feedback from the committee, staff will request the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign a contract with MIG from Portland. She advised that within the next few weeks, she will email notices to recruit a project team representing several areas of the community. Vice Chair Stewart has agreed to participate on the project team, which will involve three to four in-depth meetings before a proposal is ready to come before the Planning/Parks Board for review, public hearing and a recommendation to the City Council.

Chair Reed asked when Ms. Hite expects a draft plan will be presented to the Board for review. Ms. Hite answered that she does not anticipate a draft plan being available for Board review until October or November. However, there will be a quick turnaround time, as the plan and the Board's recommendation must be submitted to the City Council by December or January. She advised that the City's draft plan must be submitted to the state for review by March 1st.

- **Edmonds Municipal Code Regarding Dogs.** Ms. Hite advised that several residents have requested that the City revisit the code provision that prohibits dogs on the beachfront walkways. She explained that the current rules about where dogs are and are not allowed are confusing and very restricting, and staff would like to bring this issue before the Board as a study item in June, followed by a public hearing and recommendation to the City Council. The goal is to simplify the rules based on feedback from the public.
- **Mathay Ballinger Park.** Ms. Hite said there is currently a fence around the play equipment, which will be replaced within the next month. She noted that this is the first time the City has tried the online method of voting. Nearby residents were invited to review the potential park designs and select their preference. They also had some large boards at the Frances Anderson Center for children to vote on. One design was by far the most popular, and this equipment will be installed in the near future. She said they plan to use this interactive process for future projects, as well.
- **Cemetery.** Ms. Hite reported that the cemetery mapping project is still on queue, but has not been started yet.
- **Community Garden.** Ms. Hite reported that several community members have been actively seeking alternative locations for a community garden, and \$200,000 has been set aside in the upcoming budget for acquisition of land.
- **Esperance Park.** Ms. Hite advised that she was recently approached by Snohomish County about the possibility of having the City of Edmonds receive ownership of Esperance Park.

Chair Reed asked if Esperance Park would be annexed into the City if the City receives ownership. Ms. Hite answered that annexation would be required in order to dedicate tax dollars for the park's maintenance. Chair Reed asked if acquisition of the park would be wise for the City of Edmonds. Ms. Hite explained that Esperance Park is currently enjoyed by residents in the southeast part of Edmonds, and the PROS Plan indicates a deficiency in park space to meet the needs of Edmonds residents living in that area. Because there are Edmonds residents within close walking distance to the park, staff believes its acquisition would be an asset to the City. However, she noted that the issue could become political and somewhat complicated.

- **Health and Fitness Expo and the Edmonds SeaWolves.** Ms. Hite reported that the Recreation Division is partnering with the Edmonds School District and the Edmonds SeaWolves to host a health and fitness fair and a 5K "Conquer the Hill" run to kick off the opening season game for the Edmonds SeaWolves on May 18th from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. There will be numerous booths centered on health and fitness for children and families.
- **Edmonds Half Marathon.** Ms. Hite advised that, due to difficulties with last year's promoter, the Edmonds half marathon has been cancelled this year. The intent is that the event will be locally hosted in 2014.
- **Metropolitan Park District (MPD)/Park Levy Exploratory Committee.** Ms. Hite explained that, in response to recent budget cuts and the forecast for further gaps in the budget, the City Council formed a Metropolitan Park District/Park Levy Exploratory Committee in April of 2012. The committee was charged with gathering and interpreting information about the pros and cons of an MPD. She noted that Board Member Lovell participated on the committee. She said that while the committee thought forming an MPD was a great idea, it would be a fairly large tax increase that might not have tolerance in the community at this time. The committee decided to bring forward a three-year, \$2 million park levy recommendation for the City Council to consider in 2013. During the three years, the committee would continue to work on development of an MPD. She advised that the \$2 million levy would help restore maintenance, operations and programs to the levels prior to budget cuts. It will also help balance the budget so that no additional cuts would be needed. In addition, \$300,000 of the parks levy would be used to address deferred maintenance such as restroom facilities, turf repair and replacement, sport court repair, etc. The committee will also recommend that the

capital dollars currently allocated to parks (REET fund) should be diverted to fund street overlays for the duration of the levy. She reminded the Board that citizens ranked both parks and streets as high priorities in the recent Strategic Plan. She said the committee's recommendation will be presented to the City Council's Finance Committee on May 14th.

Chair Reed asked if the levy would be a totally new tax. Ms. Hite answered affirmatively. However, Board Member Lovell pointed out that it would free money up in the general fund, and REET funding could be redirected towards street overlays, which is the public's number one concern as brought forward during the Strategic Planning process. At the end of the three-year levy, the committee will present a recommendation to the City Council regarding the MPD. He noted that the MPD process is set forth in the Revised Code of Washington and can be either complicated or simple. He summarized that the public has indicated that the City's most important need is parks and recreation facilities. The public does not want to give these amenities up or see them jeopardized. The second most important need is funding for an adequate street overlay program.

Ms. Hite said part of the impetus for the MPD discussion and exploration is the forecasted budget deficit in the near future. While it appears there will be adequate funding in 2014, the City faces a \$500,000 deficit in 2015 in the general fund. At their recent retreat, the Mayor and City Council discussed possible options for additional revenue and decided to explore the park levy option further. There is a need to balance the general fund in the next few years. As cities across the nation start to face difficult decisions based on financial situations, parks are typically the first thing to be cut because they are not mandated services. If the community understands the benefits of parks and recreational programs, they tend to be willing to support them through increased taxes. Recent statistics from the Municipal Research and Services Center indicate that 17 of the 19 levies put forward for parks in Washington State were approved last year.

Board Member Lovell asked the process for moving a park levy forward. Ms. Hite said this will be a City Council decision as to whether to place a park levy on the ballot of the next election. The issue will not come before the Planning Board for review.

Board Member Lovell said some might question why they are seeking additional findings for parks when they are cutting back public safety and City staff. However, history shows that people are willing to spend more money to support their parks. He said he participated on the task force that studied an aquatic center for Edmonds. The statistically-valid survey of the community indicated that 50% of the citizens wanted a new aquatic facility at Yost Park and were willing to pay more taxes to get it. However, this project was placed on the shelf. Ms. Hite noted that it will be considered again as part of the PROS Plan update.

Board Member Lovell commented that Ms. Hite is a jewel for the City of Edmonds. He thanked her for her dedication and attention to detail not only about what is going on now, but what can happen in the future. Chair Reed also thanked Ms. Hite for her detailed report, particularly information regarding the 4th Avenue Cultural Corridor and the Edmonds Marsh.

REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA

Chair Reed noted that a draft ordinance adopting an amendment to the zoning regulations to allow public markets in the BC, BD and CG zones was removed from the May 22nd agenda. Instead, the City Council will consider a proposal to renew the interim ordinance that is set to expire next month. The goal was to get the new ordinance through the public hearing process and final City Council approval by the first of June or end of May so that the farmers market could open on June 12th. He recommended they consider renewing the interim ordinance for now, using the same language so more thought could go into the final ordinance.

Chair Reed advised that the May 22nd agenda would include a discussion on the proposed changes to the Edmonds Way BC-EW and RM-EW zoning classifications. It may also include a discussion regarding the Westgate and Five Corners Plans. However, the City Council postponed their discussion on the issue until May 21st so Mr. Chave could be available to make a presentation. After Mr. Chave's presentation, the City Council will consider whether the Five Corners Plan or the Westgate Plan should move forward first.

Chair Reed noted that three public hearings are scheduled for June 12th: a public hearing on the Sanitary Sewer Comprehensive Plan, a public hearing on the proposed changes to the Edmonds Way BC-EW and RM-EW zoning

classifications, and a public hearing on the draft ordinance adopting amendments to the zoning regulations to allow public markets in the BC, BD and CG zones. In addition, the Board has identified a number of issues that need to be added to the extended agenda: the park naming policy, dogs on public property, introduction to the code reorganization project, PROS Plan update, and naming the SR-104 Mini Park. He said he would meet with staff to update the extended agenda.

PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Chair Reed indicated he would not be present at the next meeting. Vice Chair Stewart will lead the meeting in his absence. He also noted that Board Member Tibbott had perfect attendance at Board Meetings in 2012.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Vice Chair Stewart thanked Council Member Johnson for attending the Planning Board Meetings. She appreciates her communication and support.

Board Member Lovell reported that he and Vice Chair Stewart attended the May 7th City Council Meeting, where there was little movement on the agenda because of technical difficulties. The City Council did have a discussion about the Port's decision to withdraw their proposal to amend the Comprehensive Plan to incorporate the Harbor Square Master Plan. The City Council consulted with the City Attorney, who reiterated the fact that the City Council has three options according to code for handling the Port's submitted plan: Approve the application, approve the application with modifications, or deny the plan. So far, the City Council has taken none of these actions. As they continued their discussion, a few things became apparent to him. The City Council had been requesting staff to continue the work for what might be considered an alternative plan or subarea plan. The City Council received a letter from citizens asking for clarification on exactly what process is being followed and whether or not it is in accordance with the Revised Code of Washington. The City Council decided not to discuss the Port's plan any more, which gets back to the three alternatives. The City Council agreed to extend their discussion on the matter to the May 21st meeting. By that time, the City Attorney committed to have the answer in writing in response to the citizens' letter.

Chair Reed observed that just because the Port withdrew its application does not mean the City Council cannot act on it. Board Member Lovell said Council Member Pesto raised the questions about whether or not the Port's withdrawal essentially kills the application. The City Attorney answered no. In submitting the application, the Port began a legislative process that went through the Planning Board public hearings and a recommendation to the City Council. Just because the Port withdrew its plan does not stop the process. The City Attorney indicated that the City should or could continue the process to its conclusion as stipulated in the code. He said he assumes the direction will become clearer after the City Council's continued discussion on May 21st.

Board Member Ellis recalled that at their last meeting, the Board had a discussion about the sidewalks for the Compass Project on SR-104 being dangerous because they were located too close to the street. He said he visited the area during the past week and noticed that there is no separation between the sidewalk and street anywhere along that stretch of SR 104 except in front of the new Compass Project. Board Member Tibbott said he recently walked along 196th Street, which has a speed limit of 35 miles per hour and sidewalks with no buffers. For the most part, people drive the speed limit and the sidewalks seemed safe enough. That is not the case on Edmonds Way where the posted speed limits are 40 and 45 miles per hour and people often drive even faster. As the Board reviews the Westgate Plan, they should consider buffers between the sidewalks and traffic speeds as you move from residential to commercial areas.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.