

**CITY OF EDMONDS
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

August 12, 2015

Chair Tibbott called the meeting of the Edmonds Planning Board to order at 7:0w p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5th Avenue North.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Neil Tibbott, Chair
Philip Lovell, Vice Chair
Matthew Cheung
Carreen Rubenkönig
Daniel Robles
Valerie Stewart
Nathan Monroe

STAFF PRESENT

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager
Carrie Hite, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director
Karin Noyes, Recorder

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Todd Cloutier

READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

VICE CHAIR LOVELL MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF JULY 22, 2015 BE APPROVED AS AMENDED. BOARD MEMBER ROBLES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

No one in the audience indicated a desire to provide general public comments.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT TO PLANNING BOARD

Chair Tibbott acknowledged the written report prepared by the Development Services Director and invited Board Members to comment. Vice Chair Lovell suggested that the “Community Calendar” could be updated to include the Planning Board’s report to the City Council on September 23rd. He noted that he and Chair Tibbott would present the report. Vice Chair Lovell also asked if any Board Members attended the open house relative to the sign code, and none indicated they attended.

PUBLIC HEARING ON MARINA BEACH MASTER PLAN

Chair Tibbott briefly reviewed the rules and procedures for the public hearing and invited Ms. Hite to present the Staff Report.

Ms. Hite referred to the draft Marina Beach Master Plan, which is the culmination of approximately nine months of work that included extensive public involvement. She noted that the proposed master plan is intended to accommodate daylighting of Willow Creek. She advised that a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was formed to work on the master plan, and she introduced those members of the PAC who were present (Valerie Stewart, Rick Schaefer, Keeley O'Connell, and Susan Smiley). As per a request from Board Member Stewart, she forwarded notes from each of the PAC meetings to the Board Members just prior to the meeting. She thanked the PAC for their efforts and said she is very pleased with the draft Marina Beach Master Plan. She is anxious to hear thoughts from the Planning Board and public as the document is prepared for presentation to the City Council on August 18th.

Chris Jones, Macy/Walker, Seattle, said he was the lead consultant on developing the Marina Beach Master Plan, which was a nine month process that included significant public outreach. His experience working with the City staff and the PAC has been pleasant and fulfilling. He noted that the public open houses were well attended and the feedback provided by those in attendance was useful to the design team. He briefly reviewed that the public outreach included 14 stakeholder meetings, 3 public meetings, and several PAC meetings. The City also offered an on-line open house. All of the notes generated from the public meetings were documented by sub consultant, Enviro Issues, and the comments will be included in the master plan.

Mr. Jones said the design process started with a site context and site analysis to identify vehicular and pedestrian circulation and on-going planning efforts that impact the park. This was followed by an analysis of the parking counts and how the park is currently being used. He reviewed that two schemes (Options A and B) were presented for the public's consideration at the first open house, and these schemes were based on information provided by Shannon Wilson relative to engineering for Willow Creek. At the open house, the discussion focused on what elements of the current park the community wanted to retain, move, and/or eliminate. This conversation ultimately resulted in the creation of Option C and the elimination of Option A. Specific comments provided at the first open house emphasized the importance of place and environmental views, retention of the dog park, restroom facilities, maintaining or increasing the number of parking spaces, providing more habitat and education opportunities, and integrating the new alignment for Willow Creek into the existing park.

Mr. Jones reported that Options B and C were further refined and presented at the second open house as Options 1 and 2. Based on the feedback provided, it was clear that the majority of the community preferred Option 1, with some elements of Option 2 integrated into it. Those in attendance particularly liked the parking turnaround, the restroom location, the larger lawn area, the two overlooks, and the separation of dogs and people.

Mr. Jones further reported that Option 1 was refined and presented at the third open house in July as the preferred Master Plan. At that meeting, people expressed support for the circular walking paths, as well as the two proposed overlooks. They also voiced support for maintaining some elevation change in the grassy area to support the westerly view, but the elevation change should be minimal so the area can be a useful recreational space. He explained that he and Ms. Hite met with the Fire Department to ensure that the proposed parking turnaround would accommodate emergency vehicles. A primary restroom facility is proposed adjacent to the parking area and near the turnaround area, and an additional smaller restroom would be provided at the other end of the parking area. This smaller restroom would be located near the pedestrian bridge that serves the off-leash area and would likely be designed for low-maintenance. Two motorcycle parking stalls were added without reducing the number of vehicle spaces. A plaza area was provided to accommodate food carts, etc.

Mr. Jones reviewed that many citizens stressed the importance of maintaining the beach space, including the driftwood area, which is consistent with the overall goal of maintaining the natural environment. Maintaining views and existing uses was also important to the community. The built elements are intended to blend into the natural environment. There was community support for providing public access for non-motorized watercraft (kayaking, wind surfing, kite boarding, canoeing, etc.), and providing signage to direct people to the staging area that is available for these uses would be helpful. The preferred alternative also provides space for a play area, and there has been some discussion about moving the existing play equipment to another park location and developing a new play area that fits better with the Marina Beach Park landscape. Perhaps environmental education could be included, as well. He noted that a number of picnic tables and seating areas would be scattered throughout the park, too.

Mr. Jones reviewed that there was significant discussion at the last open house relative to the buffer that is required for Willow Creek, and he provided a picture to clearly illustrate the proposed buffer where native and adaptive vegetation would

be required. He pointed out that the uses in the southern portion of the park (off-leash area) would remain primarily the same, but there has been some discussion about moving the agility course further south and away from the entrance.

Mr. Jones recognized the importance of the potential Edmonds Crossing Project, which is currently in its early schematic phase. He explained that the scheme that is currently being considered by Washington State Ferries (WSF) was superimposed over the proposed plan to analyze and get a better understanding of how the Edmonds Crossing Project might impact elements of the proposed Master Plan. He emphasized that none of the proposed new structures would have to be removed to accommodate the currently proposed ferry alignment. However, some trees may be impacted. Most of the proposed elements will work well with what they currently know about the Edmonds Crossing Project, and Ms. Hite and her team will continue to work with representatives from Washington State Ferries to make sure the two plans are consistent.

Roger Hertrich, Edmonds, observed that discussions about relocating the ferry terminal have been going on for more than 25 years, and the project is still considered viable by Washington State Ferries (WSF). He referred to a letter addressed to Ms. Hite, which discusses the purchase and sale agreement between WSF and Unocal. The current plan is to put up to three docks at the end of a long overpass over the railroad tracks and the northern portion of Marina Beach Park. He voiced concern that if the ferry project will require a substantial portion of Marina Beach Park, a large percentage of the beach will be lost. This would particularly impact the “people” portion of the park, but not so much the “dog” portion. He suggested that rather than dividing the park into just two users (dogs and people), a third user (WSF) should also be part of the equation. If the ferry project does not move forward, the citizens would win by getting extra beach; and if it does go forward, the citizens’ beach area would be protected.

Mr. Hertrich recalled that he brought up WSF’s plan for the new ferry terminal at the last open house and was told not to worry about it because it won’t happen. However, the letter indicates that it is a very real possibility. That means all the studies and plans for Marina Beach Park will be for naught and the City will have to go back to the drawing board. Once again, he emphasized the need for a proper division of property. He noted that if the City wants to save more beach area today, a greater effort should be made to run Willow Creek further south. Rather than marching blindly forward now, he urged the City to go back to the drawing board and take into consideration the three parties (WSF, dogs and people) in order to make the plan fair for everyone.

Kojo Fordjour, Washington State Ferries (WSF), Seattle, thanked Ms. Hite and Mr. Jones for the opportunity to work with them on the early stages of the Marina Beach Master Plan process. He explained that WSF has an interest in the Marina Beach Park property and wants to make sure that both the park and the ferry projects can coexist. When doing transportation projects that go through parks, WSF is mandated by the federal government to make sure the right agreement is in place to avoid any legal challenges. According to United States Department of Transportation regulations (Section 4f), transportation facilities should not impact parks and recreation facilities. However, in this situation, when the property was purchased by the City from Unocal, it included an easement provision through the park for the transportation facility to be built. The original easement was where the old pier was located (right through the park), but subsequent design as moved the alignment to the northern portion of the park. It is believed that this new alignment would be good for WSF, the tribes and the City. At this point, WSF is working with the parks department to make sure whatever is built will not have to be torn down or relocated later to accommodate the ferry, since this would be costly and citizens would lose their park. Again, he said it is important that they work together in the future to come with the right agreement that will govern how they move forward with both projects.

Brian Adams, Bothell, said he has been visiting Marina Beach Park on a regular basis since he graduated from high school 20 years ago, and he hopes to move to Edmonds at some point in the future. He said he was present to represent the Puget Sound Kite Boarding Association, and he commended the design team for keeping kite boarders’ needs in mind as they designed the park. He said he supports the proposed master plan, but pointed out that a larger, open area would be better for launching and landing their kites safely. The current grass field provides an excellent staging location, and it is difficult to see from the drawings exactly how large the new grass area would be. He noted that they need approximately 100 feet in both directions, and soft area is better. He also noted that the slight grade increase in the grassy area could impact kite boarders slightly, and he questioned if the grade change is absolutely necessary. He observed that the grass space could be used for a variety of recreational opportunities.

Susan Smiley, Edmonds, said she participated on the PAC, and she and her husband visit Marina Beach Park frequently. She said she has a personal interest in salmon and reintroducing them into the natural areas. She said she has been amazed with how the project has developed. From the first time the PAC met and throughout the open houses, there have been many comments and all were taken into consideration. The ones that couldn't be taken care of were explained well. For example, Keeley O'Connell explained that fire pits are bad because burning driftwood creates dioxins in the air, which is bad for the salmon. Based on this information, the PAC determined that fire pits would not be appropriate. She recalled that the PAC had several discussions about potential impacts from the new ferry terminal, and it was emphasized in the plan that the most costly elements of the plan would not be impacted. She said she supports the plan and she is excited to see salmon come back.

NO ONE ELSE IN THE AUDIENCE INDICATED A DESIRE TO ADDRESS THE BOARD AND THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

Vice Chair Lovell observed that because the City's plans for Marina Beach Park are way ahead of WSF's plans for the new ferry terminal, what the City puts in should count. However, it is a wonderful idea to coordinate the design and implementation of a master plan that minimizes potential destructive work in the future in order to accommodate the new ferry docking system. This is good planning that reflects what the public would be supportive of. He referred to the overlay of the potential ferry facility and noted that a portion of it would sit on property that is owned by the Port of Edmonds. Neither the City nor WSF has any jurisdiction over the land that is owned by the Port of Edmonds, but it is apparent that WSF does have some jurisdictions over the park lands that the City is leasing from Unocal. Ms. Hite said it is up to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to enter into conversations with the Port, and this likely occurred during the design phase when the current concept was drawn. Mr. Fordjour said it has been a long time since the design document was released, and he cannot remember what discussions occurred. However, he recognized that WSF and WSDOT will have to work with the Port to resolve the issue. He acknowledged that, as currently proposed, the ferry project would impact Port property; but he emphasized that the designs are not final.

Vice Chair Lovell asked if WSDOT has a potential schedule in place for moving the Edmonds Crossing Project forward. Mr. Fordjour said that although it is identified in WSF's long-range plan, it is quite far away. He explained that the long-range plan will be updated soon and the project's timing may be adjusted as part of this exercise. He reminded the Board that the City is currently working with WSDOT and Burlington Northern Santa Fe to resolve the issue of providing better access over the railroad tracks, as well. Vice Chair Lovell summarized that all that is known for sure is that the project is included in WSF's long-range plan. Mr. Fordjour explained that WSF studies all of the ferry facilities within the transportation system to determine those that need to be replaced, relocated, etc. The Edmonds Crossing Project is currently identified for 2026 or 2027, but the timing may change when the long-range plan is updated in 2016.

Board Member Stewart commented that, if and when WSF decides to move forward with the ferry project, the utmost attention should be paid to the creek channel. The ferry project should not disturb this creek channel, and it should not require that it be relocated in the future. Mr. Fordjour said his understanding is that the City is working on a plan to daylight Willow Creek in conjunction with implementation of the Marina Beach Master Plan, and WSF is very interested in the new Critical Areas Ordinance and Shoreline Master Program, which redesignate the Edmond Marsh and Willow Creek and adjusts the buffer. These documents will change the dynamic of what WSF can do.

Board Member Stewart thanked Ms. Hite, Mr. Jones and the PAC for putting together a very viable plan, as well as a process that was very robust and all inclusive. She also thanked Ms. Hite for providing notes from some of the PAC meetings, which are helpful for the public, Board and City Council to see how the plan evolved. However, she noted that the Board only received notes from two of the PAC meetings. Mr. Jones agreed there were more PAC meetings, but he received the request late and was not able to collect all of the notes prior to the meeting. He agreed to provide a list of all of the PAC meetings, as well as the notes from each one.

Board Member Stewart pointed out that the notes from the PAC meetings represent discussions where there was common ground amongst the members, but they do not represent a full range of how matters were discussed. She felt it was important to bring to the public's notice that other concerns were raised and discussed, as well. For example, they discussed the dog park use as being somewhat incompatible with the beach, as well as the creek channel where they are trying to bring salmon back. She said she specifically expressed concern about the creek buffers, which were originally supposed to be 100 feet,

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but were allowed to be reduced in some locations due to buffer averaging. She asked that the buffers between the dog park and the creek be increased. While this would result in a smaller dog park, it would protect habitat from degradation caused by the dogs. At the very least, the master plan should provide enough room for the larger buffers to occur if deemed necessary in the future.

Board Member Stewart asked if the design team consulted with the tribes relative to the master plan, particularly the buffers. She suggested that asking for their input shows that they care about their role in the community. The government needs to ensure that salmon habitat is restored and protected for future generations, in particular the native population, and including the tribes in the discussion would be appropriate. Mr. Jones acknowledged that the tribes were not specifically invited to participate in the master plan discussions. However, as a requirement to receiving grant funding from the Recreation and Conservation Office for the Willow Creek feasibility study, the tribes were consulted. He noted that it will take between three and five years to implement the master plan, and it will be necessary to obtain grant funding. A cultural resource assessment must be included as part of any grant application.

Board Member Monroe asked Mr. Jones to identify the elements of the plan that would have to be eliminated or relocated if WSF is unable to obtain the needed land from the Port of Edmonds. Mr. Jones explained that if the ferry terminal is required to move 30 feet to the south, it would begin to impact structures, including the restroom facility. Board Member Monroe asked if it is possible to design around these potential impacts. Mr. Jones explained that, unfortunately, WSF's current level of design does not allow the City to assume the spacing of the piers. At this time, it is a guessing game to take the information provided by WSF and accommodate it as best they can. They will continue to work with the best information available and try to accommodate WSF's plans as much as possible.

Board Member Robles observed that, although the City cannot predict what the ferry structure will look like, they do know that it will be elevated to go over the tracks and meet the ferry terminal. He asked if WSF or the City have considered parking cars below the structure. Mr. Jones agreed that would be the best solution. Board Member Robles pointed out that if the ferry structure is moved further south, the parking could go beneath the structure. Mr. Fordjour emphasized that WSF's plans are very conceptual at this time. However, because of WSF's experience in Puget Sound, they are coming up with better ways of putting piers into the ground to support structures. He said there will likely be 30 feet of clearance under the pier for cars to park. Board Member Robles asked if a shadow would be cast over the parking area, and Mr. Fordjour answered that there could be some morning shadow, but it will not likely be significant.

Board Member Robles said he believes the proposed master plan is put together well and ties up all loose ends. All he sees is opportunity. As far as non-motorized water sports, he asked if the staging area could be branded as nicely as the scuba park to the north. He expressed his belief that this is a great opportunity to draw more people to the park.

Mr. Jones explained that anything that is carried to the park is considered "personal watercraft." Paddle boards, kayaks, and canoes are the most common types of personal watercraft that are accommodated at waterfront parks. Expanding opportunities beyond that would require substantially more space. The smaller watercraft would not significantly impact the park, and an open lawn area would be great to accommodate the needs of these users.

Board Member Robles observed that it is crucial to have emergency services available in case someone is injured. He noted that this is an issue the City is currently working to address, and increasing recreational density on the waterfront could heighten the concern. Ms. Hite pointed out that the beach rangers are the City's best resource for providing assistance. They are first aid certified and are ready to help. She emphasized that the City is currently analyzing alternatives for accommodating emergency access over the tracks to the waterfront. Mr. Fordjour pointed out that the ferry would have a bus drop off location on the other side of the track where people can take an escalator up to the deck and walk. Therefore, in emergency situations, people will be able to access without crossing the railroad tracks. Mr. Adams commented that he is a Bellevue Fireman and part of a water rescue team, and he has knowledge of water rescues. He also volunteered for the Edmonds Fire Department prior to being hired by Bellevue. He pointed out that the City has a fire boat located in the marina, which is equipped to handle water rescues. The fire department can use this boat to respond to emergency situations in the water. Ms. Hite recalled that one of the City's main concerns is that a train may end up blocking the tracks, blocking the fire department's access to the waterfront.

Board Member Cheung asked if there was any community interest in putting in a rock climbing or boulder wall at Marina Beach Park when the play equipment is replaced. Ms. Hite explained that although Mr. Jones previously indicated that the existing play structure could be relocated, it is actually beyond its useful life now. Because redevelopment of the park will not happen for three to five years, the City will need to replace the play structure more immediately. They are looking at more natural play elements that could be moved during the master plan implementation process. There may be some rock climbing walls and/or boulder components that are geared towards small children, but there has not been a huge interest in having a taller climbing wall. She noted that providing a taller climbing wall would likely require an attendant to be present. However, she agreed to consider the option further.

Because two restroom facilities are proposed in the master plan, Board Member Cheung suggested they consider placing the smaller one in the off-leash area so it is easier for the dog owners to access it. Ms. Hite explained that locating the restroom on the other side of the pedestrian path would make it more difficult for staff to access for maintenance purposes. She recalled that the second restroom was provided so that dog owners did not have to walk to the main restroom in the park with their dogs. The intent was to avoid conflicts when possible. Mr. Jones pointed out that it is also important that restroom facilities are located in highly visible locations to avoid situations of vandalism.

Board Member Rubenkonig said she benefited greatly from the PAC notes that were provided prior to the meeting; it helped her better understand how the design was driven and how the public comments were addressed. Although the turnaround area has been reviewed by the fire department for adequate emergency access, she asked if there would be sufficient space for Community Transit and school buses to access the park, as well. Mr. Jones acknowledged that this was not considered as part of the fire department's evaluation. He agreed to gather information to make sure the turnaround can accommodate buses.

Board Member Rubenkonig said the PAC notes indicated there was some discussion about the beach not being a safe place for paddle boarding. Ms. Hite said the discussion came up when a paddle board vendor approached the City with a proposal to locate at Marina Beach Park. The vendor visited the park on a windy day and voiced concerns about safety. The PAC discussed that the safety of small watercraft at Marina Beach Park would be weather dependent.

Board Member Rubenkonig suggested that the City consider limiting parking at Marina Beach Park to two hours. Ms. Hite responded that at least some of the parking spaces provided for the park are currently limited to three hours. However, she noted that the Port shares a parking lot with park visitors, and she is not sure if there is a time limit on these spaces. She recalled that during the open houses, they heard that there is already enough parking at the park, even it is sometimes difficult to find a space. Concern was expressed that adding more parking would impact the capacity of the park. The proposed master plan proposes the same amount of parking in order to address this concern. Board Member Rubenkonig asked if consideration would be given to Community Transit potentially expanding its service to help people get to the park.

Board Member Rubenkonig said her sense is that the purpose of daylighting Willow Creek is to increase salmon habitat. She questioned if there would be a method established to measure the success of the project over time. Based on the findings of whether or not the City is meeting its goal of increasing salmon habitat, the activities allowed in the park could be adjusted accordingly. Ms. Hite said the purpose of this planning phase is to use Best Available Science (BAS) to anticipate and plan ahead so they do not have to make changes after the plan is implemented. However, if they find that salmon habitat has not been increased, they could adjust the buffers and change the types of recreation that is allowed within the buffers. Board Member Rubenkonig commented that salmon habitat will always be a driving force in planning for Marina Beach Park, and Ms. Hite agreed that will remain a priority as stated in both the Marina Beach Master Plan and in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan.

Board Member Rubenkonig asked if it would be possible for the City to reevaluate how the park space is distributed if and when the ferry terminal is constructed. She observed that, at this time, there is nothing set in stone as to how the park space would be distributed amongst those with dogs and those without dogs. Ms. Hite agreed that there is nothing that requires the park to be divided equally between the two user groups. However, the City's goal was to listen to all constituents and come up with a plan that serves the most citizens possible based on a robust public process. She believes the current plan is a win-win for all citizens. Although some expressed concern about the off-leash area, many voiced support.

Board Member Rubenkönig suggested that the City must consider three players when determining how Marina Beach Park will be used: dogs, people and ferries. Ms. Hite emphasized that the proposed plan does not define percentages or ratios for uses within the park. The proposed uses are reflective of the community's input of what they would like to see at the park. She pointed out that salmon habitat must also be considered.

Board Member Rubenkönig said she does not support the removal of the existing, well-loved fire pits. Her family brings their own firewood to burn rather than using drift wood. She noted that there are very few remaining fire pits in the community (Richmond Beach and Golden Gardens). Fire pits are part of the culture of Edmonds. While she understands the concern that burning driftwood creates dioxins in the air that harm salmon, she requested that the few remaining fire pits at Marina Beach Park remain open for public use. Board Member Robles agreed that the fire pits are wonderful amenities that serve a variety of citizens. Chair Tibbott concurred and noted that there is a fire pit at Carkeek Park, too, but it is separated from the beach.

Board Member Stewart asked if the proposed master plan provides any other alternatives for cooking, and Ms. Hite noted that there will be barbeques in the park area, but not closer to the beach. Board Member Rubenkönig said she has not heard of any safety problems associated with the fire pits, and if burning driftwood is a concern, they could post signs that ask people not to burn driftwood. Mr. Jones expressed his belief that if driftwood is available, it is inevitable that people will burn it in the fire pits. Ms. Hite observed that Carkeek Park and Golden Garden Park are examples of parks where very little driftwood remains because it has all been burned over time. Board Member Stewart noted that driftwood is part of habitat, and she would defer to the consultant's recommendation that fire pits not be allowed at the beach. Board Member Rubenkönig noted that there is no lack of driftwood at Marina Beach Park. If it ends up being a problem in the future, the fire pits could be removed. She commented that eliminating the fire pits is more of a proactive measure than reacting to a situation that exists. Driftwood collects regularly at Marina Beach Park.

Board Member Cheung pointed out that Golden Gardens Park has a lot more trash near the area of the fire pit where people hang out in the evenings. He suggested that fire pits encourage this type of behavior. Chair Tibbott suggested that staff share the Board's concerns relative to the fire pit with the City Council and invite them to discuss the issue as part of their final approval of the plan.

Vice Chair Lovell said that as he read through the materials from the beginning of the process, he noticed that there has been a lot of discussion about dogs. Comments include dogs running around fences, dogs biting people, dogs out of control, park staff having to pick up after dogs, the number of bags the City provides for disposal of waste, the need for better signage, etc. He suggested that the City needs stronger regulations and a method of enforcement. Ms. Hite said parks already have strict rules pertaining to dogs, but the City does not have sufficient staff to enforce the rules. Beach Rangers try to inform people of the regulations, but they have no authority to enforce them. She noted that dogs are not allowed in most City parks; and with the exception of Marina Beach Park, parks that do allow dogs require that they be on a leash. Again, she said the problem is more about enforcement than adequate regulations. She said she receives numerous comments about dogs in parks. Many request that the regulations be tightened to restrict dogs from all parks, but others want to have more relaxed rules. This is a difficult discussion for the community to have because those in favor of dogs and those opposed to dogs are split evenly and people are very passionate.

Vice Chair Lovell referred to Mr. Hertrich's concerns and noted that, at this time, there is nothing in writing that would prevent the City from eliminating the dog park at some point in the future, particularly if the ferry terminal is relocated as proposed. Ms. Hite said it would not be appropriate for the plan to state that if the ferry terminal is constructed, the dog park would be eliminated. However, the plan could make it clear that while the City believes that the conflict between the flyover for the ferry terminal and the proposed plan has been mitigated, there may be some minimal impact to the dog park from the flyover if WSDOT is not successful with the Port and needs to use more of Marina Beach Park. Vice Chair Lovell noted that elimination of the dog park would definitely be on the table if the Port does not allow WSDOT access over their property. Ms. Hite said adjustments that are needed to the park as a result of the future Edmonds Crossing Project would need to address all parts of the park, and not just the off-leash area.

Vice Chair Lovell asked Ms. Hite to explain the process and schedule for moving the Master Plan forward for approval and implementation. He said he has heard the suggestion that Marina Beach Park should be redeveloped before Willow Creek is daylighted. Ms. Hite advised that the draft plan will be presented to the City Council on August 18th, followed by a public

hearing and additional discussion by the City Council in September. Once the master plan has been adopted, the alignment of Willow Creek will be clearly identified and design of the actual marsh side of daylighting willow creek can proceed to 60%. In the next three years the City will start to work on construction drawings for the park improvements. The goal is to submit permit applications for both projects at the same time so that construction can happen simultaneously. The two projects present some funding challenges because daylighting of Willow Creek on the marsh side is estimated to be between \$5 and \$8 million (including additional habitat in the upper waters) and implementing the park improvements is estimated to be \$3 million. Funding of both projects will require a number of grants, and it will be challenging to queue them up at the same time to go out to bid in the next three to five years. She said she is currently working on the Capital Improvement Plan, which includes some placeholders for Marina Beach Park in the out years.

Chair Tibbott pointed out that the alignment of the creek that runs through Meadowdale Beach Park and Lund's Gulch changes quite a bit as it meanders through the sand. He asked if the City anticipates that Willow Creek's alignment will also shift over time. Ms. O'Connell explained that Willow Creek is quite different than the creek at Meadowdale Beach Park, which is constricted in a way that is not supportive of the creek channel, itself. Willow Creek is being designed in a better way that will allow the creek to function properly. She noted there is also a lot more beach in front of the railroad tracks at Marina Beach Park as compared to Meadowdale Beach Park, and the beach is the area where the creek tends to migrate. The alignment of Willow Creek will not likely shift until it reaches the sandy area, then prevailing winds and the current will cause it to migrate to the north. She explained that, unlike the creek at Meadowdale Beach Park, Willow Creek is actually a tidal channel and its purpose is to get waters back into the Edmonds Marsh. There will not be huge fresh water pulses down the channel because the water will go through the marsh first and the marsh will regulate how the water goes in and out of the system. There is no marsh at Meadowdale Beach Park, so its creek functions quite differently.

Chair Tibbott asked if the City would employ any different construction techniques east of the bridge to keep the creek in the channel or if the same thing could be accomplished via natural means. Ms. O'Connell answered that this can be done via natural means. The slope will be designed at the proper angle and the appropriate size of gravel will be used to create a channel that won't migrate.

Chair Tibbott asked to what extent the off-leash area will impact salmon migration. Ms. O'Connell replied that the main interest of the state in funding the daylighting project is to get juvenile salmon back to spawn. All species of juvenile salmon would use Edmonds Marsh if they could just access it, but right now they cannot navigate the current pipe system. By daylighting the creek, they are inferring they will be able to, and they want to do monitoring to insure that they are actually using the system. This is an important project because all of the marshes of this size in the most urbanized area of Puget Sound (North of Everett to South of Tacoma) have all been lost. Edmonds Marsh is one hold out that never got filled or developed because the Edmonds community chose to protect it. The juvenile salmon that still migrate in this portion of the shoreline have few opportunities to access the habitats that were historically very important. In terms of salmon recovery, we need these habitats accessible so that juveniles can get robust enough to return as adults and spawn in the creeks. Historically, Willow Creek and Shellebarger Creek likely supported Coho adult spawning; and that could happen again, more likely in Willow Creek and less likely in Shellebarger because of the urbanization of the area.

Chair Tibbott asked to what extent organisms or odors from the dog park affect salmon migration. Ms. O'Connell explained that salmon are completely driven by their sense of smell. Juvenile salmon that hang out on Marina Beach can smell the biological impulse of the marsh coming out of the pipe, but they cannot figure out how to get in. Once they get into the creek channel, they would get flushed into the marsh with the tide, and then they would feed in the marsh and get flushed back out. Things in the water that affect their olfactory glands can have an impact. Another issue is trampling, there was discussion at the PAC meetings about dogs going around the fence and up into the northern part of Marina Beach. In this case, if they go around the fence, they can get into the creek. There are creeks where dogs and kids play and salmon still migrate through just fine, so it has more to do with the volume of dogs. In general, they also know that the impact of waste (solid and urine), impacts water quality, and a park like the off-leash area would not likely be permitted on Puget Sound today. She summarized that, at this time, the City does not have enough studies to know, by the numbers, what the direct impact is. However, it is known that an off-leash park is not the best use of a beach property, especially one that is protected for marine habitat.

Chair Tibbott recognized that salmon habitat is one of the priorities associated with daylighting Willow Creek. He invited staff to identify other important priorities associated with the project. Ms. O'Connell said the top priority is salmon, but

another important priority for the community is stormwater and floodwater management. Daylighting of Willow Creek will allow the water to drain faster, which is part of the solution to the Dayton/SR-104 problem where the intersection floods during certain high tides and high run-off events because Shellebarger Creek cannot properly flow into and out of the marsh. This problem is exacerbated at high tide when the stormwater system backs up from the hydraulic pressure on the actual outfalls near the beach. Part of the solution to the flood issue is daylighting the marsh and then realigning and improving the hydrology of Shellebarger Creek. Another priority is climate adaptation. The marsh can hold a high volume of water, and that can play into the community's ability to adapt to and manage additional sea level rise in the future. An additional benefit of having a functional marsh is that tidal marshes sequester three to five times more carbon from the atmosphere than healthy and mature northwest forests.

Chair Tibbott noted that a number of trees are identified on the plan, but it is difficult to determine which ones are existing mature trees. He asked to what extent the existing trees will have to be removed to accommodate the new plan and where new trees will be planted. Mr. Jones responded that specific landscape requirements will be addressed during the construction design phase, but the intent is to maintain as many healthy, significant trees as possible. Mature trees are important to parks in the urban area to make them feel well established and provide a sense of permanence.

To address earlier concerns, Mr. Jones pointed out that the buffer on the south side of the creek adjacent to the dog park would be wider than 50 feet and closer to 60 to 75 feet. The buffer could be expanded at some point in the future if it is determined necessary to protect the marsh. Ms. Hite added that the fence along the creek is about 70 to 75 feet from the creek, and people must go past the fence to access the dog park. Board Member Stewart asked how much of the existing dog park would be remediated to provide the buffer area identified in the plan. Mr. Jones answered that the dog park would be reduced by nearly 1/3. He expressed his belief that the proposed plan represents a good balance for salmon, people and dogs, and the dog owners seemed to understand that, as well. Board Member Stewart pointed out that tribes prefer a 100-foot buffer.

Board Member Rubenkönig expressed her desire that the trees on the mound near the parking area be maintained. She referred to the additional trees that are proposed along the creek and asked how tall they must be to provide adequate shade. Mr. Jones said these trees would likely be alders (not coniferous) and the mature height would be about 40 feet. Board Member Stewart agreed that alder is one tree species for riparian areas, but there are other species that might be appropriate, as well. Mr. Jones pointed out that there are only about five tree varieties that can withstand the saltwater environment.

Chair Tibbott said he is very impressed with the completeness of the plan that addresses the community's stated desires for the park.

Ms. Hite summarized that the Board's discussion as follows:

- The majority of the Board Members are in favor of including fire pits in the plan.
- There was concern that the creek buffer adjacent to the off-lease area should be larger.
- The summary notes do not adequately capture all of the PAC's discussions, particularly on issues where there was conflict.
- Safety and emergency access is important.

VICE CHAIR LOVELL MOVED THAT THE BOARD FORWARD THE DRAFT MARINA BEACH MASTER PLAN TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PLANNED PUBLIC HEARING WITH THE RECOMMENDATION THAT THE CITY COUNCIL REVIEW AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING RELATED ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE PLANNING BOARD:

- **COORDINATE THE MARINA BEACH PARK MASTER PLAN DESIGN WORK THE WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND WASHINGTON STATE FERRY'S PLANS FOR EDMONDS CROSSING.**
- **LOCATION AND QUANTITY OF FIRE PITS ON THE BEACH.**
- **DEPTH OF THE BUFFER ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE CREEK ADJACENT TO THE DOG PARK.**

APPROVED

- **TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, PHASE THE WILLOW CREEK DAYLIGHTING PROJECT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MARINA BEACH PARK MASTER PLAN SO THAT CONSTRUCTION CAN OCCUR CONCURRENTLY.**
- **EMERGENCY ACCESS TO THE WATERFRONT IS VERY IMPORTANT.**
- **INCLUDE THE TRIBES AS STAKEHOLDERS IN FUTURE DISCUSSIONS.**

BOARD MEMBER RUBENKONIG SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA

Chair Tibbott pointed out that there are open meetings in August and September. The Board agreed to cancel their August 26 meeting and move their discussion relative to the Development Code Update Process to September 9th.

PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Chair Tibbott thanked Board Member Stewart for providing a link to the video describing how Edmonds came to acquire park land along the waterfront. He encouraged the Board Members to watch the video and share it with others.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board Member Monroe commented that the Marina Beach Park Plan was put together well.

Board Member Rubenkönig announced that the Waste Warriors are still looking for volunteers to help at the Taste of Edmonds. She encouraged Board Members to contact Steve Fischer if they would like to help. She commented that serving is a great way to learn how to handle the household waste stream (food recycling, waste recycling, and landfill).

Board Member Stewart announced that a new water quality monitoring program is being launched in the City by the group, Students Saving Salmon (students and science teachers at Woodway High School). With the help of Keeley O’Connell, the group has received over \$40,000 in grant funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Google, and the Hubbard Foundation. The funding will be used to train and supervisor students who will monitor the surface water quality of streams that feed into the marsh, as well as Shell Creek, which has a viable salmon population, as well. The goal is to establish a baseline of data and then measure the quality over time and into perpetuity. The program is intended to be sustainable so there will always be data available relative to the status of water quality in the City’s creeks. Because the students will be lead by rigorously-trained supervisors, the data will be robust and accepted by the State to inform citizens and decision makers on what is happening in the waters and what they can do about it. Eight sites have been identified for testing (2 at Shellebarger Creek, 2 and Willow Creek, 2 and Shell Creek, and 2 and the Edmonds Marsh).

ADJOURNMENT

The Board meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.