

AGENDA

City of Oregon City, Oregon Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

**City Hall
Commission Chambers
625 Center Street, Oregon City, OR 97045**

**Thursday, January 27, 2011
7:00 P.M.**

- 1) Call to order
- 2) Introduction of new PRAC members
- 3) Annual election of officers (Chair and Vice-chair)
- 4) Approval of minutes – December 2, 2010 meeting
- 5) Citizen comments on issues and items not on the agenda
- 6) Boards and commissions orientation manual
- 7) General business
 - a) Dog park
 - b) Goals update
 - c) Pocket parks
 - d) Other general business
- 8) PRAC member reports
- 9) Staff reports
- 10) Next scheduled meeting date – February 24, 2011
- 11) Adjournment

from Shawn Dachtler

Park-After Dark Issues

Safety
Security
Noise
Drugs
Vandalism
Privacy of surrounding residents

Potential Fixes:

1. Park Host
2. Adjust park closing hours (some variation of the suggestions below). Exceptions should be made for parks with boat landing, ball field and skate park lighting.
 - a. Open at dawn close at dusk
 - b. Open at dawn close 30-60 min past dusk

Pros and cons of adjusting hours

Pros:

1. Gives police more leverage with regards to law enforcement
2. Gives neighbors peace of mind with the ability to call police and hope for a positive result
3. Neighbors will be more inclined to call for assistance knowing they're potentially saving the park from vandalism.
4. Gives neighbors more serenity with less noise out in the dark area behind their houses where they cannot see.

Cons:

1. Discourages public use of a public space when it's dark.
2. Gives teenagers less places to park and cause a nuisance.

I think there is an assumed duty of a park neighbor. We pick up the trash and dog mess. We are usually the first to call maintenance when there is a broken swing or stuck faucet. We are an extension of the limited park maintenance staff. I like to think of the park as my neighbor. As a neighbor, the only issues I have with the park are its nuisance traits that creep up after dark. People stand out behind our fence in the dark smoking illegal substance. They drive their cars at high rates of speed through the parking lot to show off to their friends. They even sit in groups under the stars and yell and scream at late hours. Drug deals have been observed in the parking lots and there are records showing recent drug busts in one City Park

All we ask is for our neighbor (the park) to give a little back to us after dark as we give to it during the day. It's the neighborly thing to do.

- Oregon City Pool including "leisure components" (see MASTER PLAN pg 10) - outside area adjacent to the wading pool and new slide (see also cost recovery pg 15) - THE NEW SLIDE COULD VERY WELL BE A BIG PURCHASE (\$50-75K+) AND NEEDS TO BE PLANNED FOR IN THE CITY'S BUDGET FOR THE "OUT YEARS". WILL NEED REPLACEMENT WITHIN ~3-5 YEARS.
- ADDITIONAL STAFF - THERE HAS BEEN ONE HIRE WITHIN THE LAST 17 MONTHS, RECOMMEND ONE ADDITIONAL HIRE IN EACH YEAR 2012, 2013 TO BRING US CLOSER TO THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF ONE FTE PER EVERY 7 TO 10 DEVELOPED ACRES.
- GLEN OAK MASTER PLAN - CONTINUE CURRENT PLAN TO BEGIN PROCESS IN SPRING/SUMMER 2011
- WESLEY LYNN PHASE 2 - ONGOING - NEW GRANT RECEIVED FROM METRO ENHANCEMENT FUND FOR HIGH SCHOOL BATHROOM/SNACK BAR PROJECT
- RV PARK
- OFF-LEASH DOG PARK (SEE PGS 11,21 IN MASTER PLAN ... "UPGRADE EXISTING PARKS"). BEING RESEARCHED BY THE COMMITTEE, WILL RECEIVE REPORT 2 DECEMBER FROM SUB-COMMITTEE.
- PROTECT THE HISTORICAL ASSETS OF OREGON CITY – COMMITTEE FORMING?
- Barclay Park Connection Trail
- Wesley Lynn-Chapin Trail
- Fitness course at Chapin Park

2011 PRAC Goals

1. Identify funding for phase 2 and complete development of Wesley Lynn Park.
2. Determine future plans for RV Park.
3. Seek funding and begin new park development projects per completed master plans for Canemah Children's Neighborhood Park and Chapin Park.
4. ~~Playground installation of Canemah Children's Neighborhood Park.—(duplicate of #3)~~
5. Begin Master Planning process for the Glen Oak Road and Filbert Run properties.
6. ~~Determine future use of Carnegie Center.~~
7. Investigate dog parks.
8. Naming trail linkages/standardized signage.
9. Work with the City in the process for determining the use of the End of Oregon Trail Interpretive Center site.
10. ~~Support the effort and provide input as necessary for the transfer of the Ermatinger House to the National Park Service.~~

2011 PRAC Goals

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4. Begin Master Planning process for the Glen Oak Road and Filbert Run properties.
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7. Work with the City in the process for determining the use of the End of Oregon Trail Interpretive Center site.

End of the Oregon Trail Site

The End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center closed in September 2009 and has remained vacant. At the end of 2009, the City Commission formed a 17-member citizen task force and hired AMS Planning and Research to guide a community process to develop a vision and operations plan for the End of the Oregon Trail site. AMS presented their comprehensive findings and recommendations at a City Commission work session on October 12, 2010. To date, no decisions have been made regarding these recommendations or the future of the End of the Oregon Trail site.

The Regional Visitor's Information Center continues to be operated on the site by Clackamas County (Tourism Division) through an agreement which has been in place since June, 2000.

While the decision making process continues for the End of the Oregon Trail site, the Community Services Department is responsible for maintenance of the entire grounds and Facilities. Though most of the facilities are vacant, they still require ongoing staff time and resources to keep them in a "mothballed" state. This includes utilities, and other costs. A number of maintenance items have been addressed since the facility has been closed, including HVAC systems, roof leaks, and other.

Staff recommends Commission review of the AMS report and recommendations, and direction on the future use of this site.

Ermatinger House

Over the course of last year, the City engaged in formal discussions with the National Park Service (NPS) about the possibility of transferring the ownership of the Ermatinger House between our agencies. Following this process, the NPS notified the City that it is not able to provide direct financial support at this time. An Act of Congress will be required in order for the Ermatinger House to become part of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. Legislation, which is currently *not* being entertained, can be a multi-year process. Initially, it was perceived that the Ermatinger House could be added to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site as part of a minor boundary adjustment. Upon further investigation, the NPS determined that this was not feasible due to the fact that it is not a contiguous property to the McLoughlin and Barclay Site, and thusly, formal legislation would be required.

The NPS is interested in being involved with and identifying ways to partner with Oregon City to assist in the preservation of the historically significant Ermatinger House. The NPS is willing to enter into an agreement to provide technical assistance and other programming support.

Recently, some significant structural issues in the house were discovered. Due to the immediate safety concerns, we closed the facility to public use facility until further notice. Over the past few weeks we have been in the process of investigating these issues further. This has included a review by our building department, an architect, and a structural engineer evaluation. From initial reviews, some type of major renovation and repair will be necessary to remedy these structural issues, if the City wishes to preserve the house and open it to the public once again. We are expecting a final report with specific recommendations/solutions from the structural engineer around the first part of February. These solutions will likely be expensive, depending on the direction the City chooses to go. Once we have determined the direction of resolving the structural issues along with the associated costs, a funding source will need to be identified. Potential sources *may* include, but *are not necessarily limited to*: general fund contingency; bond measure; urban renewal; grants; private fundraising.

At such point when the structural issues are satisfactorily resolved, the City will need to determine how it wishes to continue operating the house. Our most recent agreement with our volunteer house curators, Mr. and Mrs. Harding, expired on December 31, 2010. Either this arrangement would need to be extended in some form, or the City must determine another manner in which to manage and run the house.

Proposed Parks & Public Spaces Utility Fee

The most significant challenges in our parks operations division are staffing levels and deferred maintenance. These issues are magnified by the addition of multiple new parks and facilities over the past few years to meet the needs of the growing community.

Our adopted *Parks and Recreation Master Plan – 5 Year Vision Implementation Plan (2008)* identifies improving maintenance staffing levels and addressing deferred maintenance as our top priorities. Historically, the Parks Division has been understaffed for the amount of parks and open space acreage responsibility. The inability to substantially improve our staffing levels is tied to the reliance on the General Fund.

In order to meet just the low end of national staffing averages Oregon City would need to add approximately 7 additional positions to its maintenance staff. This accounts for our ability to provide appropriate levels of service to our current parks and public open spaces, as well as future additional parks that are planned for Oregon City. Our minimum goal is to add two additional full-time positions over the next 3 years. This would at least allow us to not fall backward further in our staffing to parks acreage ratio.

Additionally, our ability to adequately maintain our parks system is challenged by an estimated deferred maintenance backlog of \$750,000 - \$1 million. This is related to the aging infrastructure in many of our older parks facilities. Examples of these items include but are not limited to pathways, parking lots, irrigation systems, restrooms, and other infrastructure in need of either renovation or complete replacement. As said above, the parks maintenance division is dependent almost exclusively on the city General Fund, including deferred maintenance items.

With our existing limited budgetary resources, we are able to address only a very small portion of these deferred maintenance items on an annual basis. In order to address deferred, current and future maintenance needs of our city's park system, a funding source will need to be determined so this operation is not solely dependent on the General Fund. The most likely new source of funding is a parks and public spaces maintenance utility fee. As with the City's Pavement Maintenance Utility Fee, this type of utility fee may be approved and enacted by the Commission. In order to implement this fee, a methodology would have to be developed. The process of developing a utility fee methodology would include an extensive process to identifying the parameters and analyze the need. It would involve significant public involvement process. Though no methodology has been developed at this point, we can approximate the possible amount of funding that might be generated for a maintenance utility fee. The City has roughly 9,000 utility billing customers. Based on this number, it can be estimated that for every \$1 charged monthly, approximately



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\$108,000 would be generated annually. A \$5 per month fee would generate approximately \$540,000 annually, and so on. These estimates do not include any factoring for commercial utility rates within the methodology.

Staff recommends beginning the process of developing a methodology for a Parks and Public Spaces Utility Fee. This process will likely take from several months to a year to develop a recommendation. Once a recommendation is developed, the Commission would have the choice of implementing the fee or deferring its implementation for a later date.