

Minutes

Parks and Recreation Board

June 26, 1990

The regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board was called to order by Mrs. Beverly Griffith, Chair at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Parks and Recreation Department Main Office. Board Members present: Beverly Griffith, Louise Nivison, Lawrence Britton, Agnes Edwards, Charles Kreutz, Ruby Williams, Sue Robinson, Terry Colgan, Charles Heimsath, Ron Cartledge, David Mascorro, Neil Iscoe and ErmaLinda Cruz-Torres. Staff present were: Sarah Campbell, Manuel Mollinedo, Jody Hamilton, Prenis Williams, Carolyn Kelley, Peter Marsh, Ron Sparks, David Mascorro, Carolyn Nelson, Dennis Bleier, Rick Fuszek and Donna Bohls

ITEMS FOR ACTION

Special Presentation Parque Zaragoza Development Plan

Peter Marsh, staff engineer, made a report to the Board on the proposed development and renovation for Parque Zaragoza. Several outdoor improvements are being proposed rather than renovation of the current recreation center.

ErmaLinda Cruz Torres made a motion to approve the proposed development plan. This motion was seconded by Agnes Edwards and passed with no dissent.

Public Hearing - Proposal to Rename Section of Town Lake Parkland

Sarah Campbell, Planning and Design, made a presentation to the Board about the request to rename a section of Town Lake Park and reminded everyone that this was a public hearing.

Mr. Joel Hillard, representative of the Youth Hostel, announced that he had surveyed 7 apartment complex managers regarding the proposed renaming and had received no negative responses. This was done in response to the request to gather public input at a previous Parks and Recreation Board meeting.

Mr. Tony Platino, Youth Hostel Board Member, addressed the Board in favor of calling the area International Peace Park not Peace Point as suggested as a possible alternative. He was concerned about the connotation of smallness associated with the word "point".

Mr. Sabino Renteria, United East Austin Coalition, addressed the Board and indicated that he had no problem with renaming a section of the park. He was also interested in renaming a section of Town Lake Park near Martin Junior High School.

Mr. Charles Gandy, representative of the Youth Hostel, addressed the Board and spoke in favor of the renaming proposal. He indicated that his group was not interested in any of the alternatives presented by staff and wanted

the area named Austin International Peace Park. Mr. Gandy indicated that he favored this name as a marketing tool to help draw overnight visitors to the hostel.

Charles Heimsath, Chair of the Land and Facilities Committee, reported that the Committee felt that Peace Park and Pease Park were too similar and would not recommend that change. They would consider a change to Peace Point.

After considerable discussion, Terry Colgan made a motion to reject the name "Austin International Peace Park" and to accept the staff recommendation to adopt the sub-section park name of "Austin International Peace Point." ErmaLinda Cruz Torres seconded the motion and it passed 9-For, 3-Against on a roll-call vote.

### Mount Bonnell - Fencing

Manuel Mollinedo made a short presentation regarding the fencing being erected at Mt. Bonnell between the park property and Mrs. Scarbrough-Wilson's property adjoining the park. He indicated that the Historic Landmark Commission was considering "Historic" zoning for the park. Board Members discussed briefly the history on this issue. Several of the homeowners in the Watersedge subdivision had approached the Parks Board several months earlier about the damage to their homes caused by rock throwing from Mt. Bonnell Park and from Mrs. Wilson's property. The fence was a preventive measure authorized by the previous PARD Director to help curb the rock throwing activity. Dr. Iscoe questioned whether the houses were built in an area not suitable for housing. Mr. Matthews discussed the precedent that would be set by erecting a barrier between public parkland and private property to control access.

Susan Toomey-Frost, President of We Care Austin, reported a unanimous objection by the Board of We Care Austin to the construction of the fence. Mrs. Frost polled the Board Members by phone. She read into the record a piece written by Lucadia Pease recounting the beauty of Mt. Bonnell.

Mr. Reader, Cassandra Bender, Debra White, Leah Inmann Lee, Tony Hackman, Brad Kaylor, Ginny Rosas and Ray Yule, all individuals representing themselves, spoke against the fence. They all objected to the fence because it blocked part of the natural beauty of the mountain, the view and the sunset. Each speaker indicated a need for informational signs about rock throwing and the need for peer pressure to keep people from throwing rocks.

Mr. Matthews asked if there were any representatives from the homeowners present at the meeting. None were present.

Charles Heimsath, Chair of the Land and Facilities Committee, indicated that the Committee had met earlier the same evening and recommended that construction of the fence stop immediately to await the Landmark Commission's ruling.

Charles Kreutz asked if there was any reason that the Committee did not recommend removal of the fencing. Charles Heimsath indicated that there was no reason that the Committee did not extend their recommendation to

removal of the fencing.

Terry Colgan had visited the site earlier in the day and provided a videotape for the Board to watch. He showed the area on Mrs. Wilson's property where the rocks were thrown from and the position of the houses below the cliff.

Dr. Neil Iscoe presented a substitute motion which was seconded by Terry Colgan. The motion passed unanimously on a roll-call vote.

## RESOLUTION

### PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

JUNE 26, 1990

**WHEREAS**, thousands of Austinites use Mount Bonnell Park on a regular basis;

**WHEREAS**, fencing any normal park area sets a dangerous precedent;

**WHEREAS**, the fencing alone will never provide an adequate solution to the rock throwing problem;

**WHEREAS**, at the June 26, 1990 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board there was unanimous public opposition to the fence;

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Parks and Recreation Board recommends to the Austin City Council that:

1. Parks and Recreation Department staff work with the Historic Landmark Commission to secure historic status for Mount Bonnell Park.
2. The current fence be removed.
3. Additional CIP funding in the amount of \$10,000 be made available for non-fence park improvements that will encourage normal park use.
4. Parks and Recreation Department staff be directed to investigate extending the normal operating hours of Mount Bonnell Park.
5. Parks and Recreation Department staff be directed toward pursuing educational and other activities to reduce/eliminate vandalism.

Agnes Edwards asked that staff investigate the possibility of lengthening park hours in Mount Bonnell Park. Mr. Mollinedo indicated that he would meet with the City Attorney and report back regarding the possibility of a curfew extension. He indicated that the Department was under a Federal Judge's ruling and doubted that lengthening the hours at Mt. Bonnell would be possible.

#### Cemeteries Contract

Jody Hamilton, Program Manager for PARD District, addressed the Board and updated them on the progress PARD has made toward contracting out management and operation of City of Austin cemeteries. Ms. Hamilton

introduced Gene Bagwell to the Parks Board. Mr. Bagwell has submitted the most favorable proposal for cemetery management/operation.

Charles Heimsath, Chair of the Land and Facilities Committee, reported the Committee recommends approval the proposed contract and submission of the contract to Council. The motion passed with no dissent.

#### AMEGO

Jody Hamilton made a presentation about the revised cost figures sent to Board Members in their packet. Ruby Williams, Chair of AMEGO Review Committee, discussed with the Board the concerns expressed by members of the committee. The committee expressed reservations about the ability of PARD to take over the maintenance of county parks for the amount of money currently being discussed. A general consensus seemed to be that the County would be getting a much better deal out of the consolidation than the City. The committee recommended the following:

- 1) The City of Austin enter into a management agreement with the County for parks maintenance and the softball program. This would exclude the LCRA parks and Tom Hughes park because of the travel distance involved.
- 2) Employees from the Travis County Parks Department would not automatically be transferred to the City of Austin.
- 3) County parks would be subject to the same standards for design, planning and maintenance as City parks.
- 4) No changes should be made in the Parks and Recreation Board due to the consolidation plans.
- 5) City Council should not take any further action toward consolidation until the concerns of the Parks Board are addressed.

This motion passed with no dissent with Terry Colgan abstaining.

#### Consider Approval of the Town Lake 138 kV Electric Transmission Lines

Peter Marsh, Staff Engineer, made a presentation to the Board regarding the proposed realignment of electric lines between south Austin and Seaholm power plant.

Charles Heimsath, Chair of the Land and Facilities Committee, reported that the Committee recommended tabling this proposal until a later date. The Committee wanted to have additional time to study the possible options.

The motion passed with only Terry Colgan dissenting.

#### Consider Temporary Access Easement to Rehabilitate the Blunn Creek Wastewater Line

Peter Marsh, Staff Engineer, made a presentation to the Board regarding the proposed rehabilitation of the Blunn Creek Line. He explained the technique to be used and the manhole construction needed. Mr. Jack Dougherty, Project Engineer from Water and Wastewater, explained the scope

of the project and the restoration that would be done to the area.

Charles Heimsath, Chair of the Land and Facilities Committee, reported that the Committee recommends following the staff recommendations with 2 additions which would be as follows:

Approval of the request for the following temporary access easements through part of Blunn Creek Nature Preserve to allow the rehabilitation of the Blunn Creek Wastewater Interceptor:

1. Route A - Between the access from Long Bow Lane and the location of the new manhole.
2. Route B - Between the existing vehicular access on St. Edwards Drive and the existing wastewater easement along Blunn Creek.

The approval of the above access easements are subject to the following conditions:

1. The project shall comply with the provisions of the "Construction in Parks Specifications", except as detailed below.
2. The two access routes shall be marked in accordance with Section 4.4(A) of the "Construction in Parks Specifications" and shall be approved by the PARD Preserves Manager. All construction activity shall be limited to the marked routes.
3. Vehicles shall be limited to a maximum size equivalent to a wheeled loader/backhoe or a 3/4 ton pickup truck. The use of any vehicles larger than this shall require the approval of PARD Preserves Manager.
4. Water and Wastewater Utility shall provide a crew to work with PARD Preserves staff not to exceed 25 man/days to remove non-native plants within the preserve.
5. On completion of all construction activity the disturbed areas shall be restored/revegetated, to the satisfaction of the PARD Preserves Manager, by:
  - (a) closing off access routes by using brush cut from site;
  - (b) spreading mulch and installing erosion controls;
  - (c) planting: 3 - 1 gallon Coral Honeysuckle  
6 - 1 gallon Turks Cap  
2 - 1 gallon American Beautyberry
6. If a rock drill is to be used in the construction activities, the creek bed shall be drilled in 4 places, the location to be marked by the PARD Preserve Manager to allow the installation of re-bar to secure stepping stones.
7. These temporary access easements shall expire 6 months after the date of approval by the Parks and Recreation Board.
8. Suitable painting/texturing of the manhole.

This motion was passed on consent.

Consider Majestic Diner Garden Request-for-Proposal

Rick Fuszek made a presentation to the Board and outlined the proposal made by Mick Vann. Susan Frost spoke before the Board opposed to the project. Charles Heimsath, Concessions on Parkland Committee, indicated that this request needed to be placed in context of the RFP and considered during consideration of all concessions. The Board passed on consent to delay this request until the Concessions Policy is finalized.

Request by the West Austin Youth Association to Improve Bechtol-Harper Field

Carolyn Kelley made a presentation to the Board regarding the WAYA proposal to make improvements/modifications to the playing fields on West 1st Street. Terry Colgan made a motion to table this proposal until the next meeting. The motion carried.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Mollinedo reported on the extended hours for recreation centers. He has instructed recreation centers to change their hours to allow for additional evening and weekend hours. Some recreation centers still have early morning hours during the summer to allow for summer day camps but these hours will change in the fall.

The Pan American Recreation Center has been offered as a location for the PAL Midnight Basketball program. The program has been proposed to run from 10:00 p.m. until midnight for at-risk youth. Rosemary Castleberry outlined the program for Board Members.

Mr. Mollinedo updated the Board on the Planning Commission recommendations for PARD's CIP.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.