



City of Port Moody

Minutes

Parks and Recreation Commission

Minutes of the meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission held on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 via Zoom.

Present

Councillor Hunter Madsen, Chair
Councillor Steve Milani, Vice-Chair
John Callaghan
John Grasty
Kate Le Souef
Haven Lurbiecki
Wilhelmina Martin
David Parker
Cleone Todgham
Megan Traverse

Absent

Rajeev Sharma (Regrets)
Chris Zhao

In Attendance

Jim LaCroix – Manager of Recreation
Philip Lo – Committee Coordinator
Robbie Nall – Parks Superintendent
Julie Pavey-Tomlinson – Director of Environment and Parks

1. Call to Order

Call to Order

1.1 The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05pm

2. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes

2.1 PRC21/004

Moved, seconded, and CARRIED

THAT the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting held on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 be adopted.

(Voting against: John Grasty)

3. Unfinished Business

4. New Business

Community Gardens

4.1 Attachment: Food Security – Community Gardens Presentation

File: 01-0360-20-10

The Parks Superintendent gave a presentation on Food Security – Community Gardens, noting the following:

- interest in community gardens and urban agriculture has been growing, in part due to the pandemic;
- benefits include increasing access to fresh foods, improving food security and mental health, and increasing physical activity and biodiversity;
- there are two popular community gardens in the City currently with wait lists: Inlet Park Community Garden, and the Port Moody Police Department Community Garden;
- the Parks and Recreation Master Plan encourages the community garden groups to consolidate and form a more effective group;
- COVID-19 has intensified concerns over food security; over 50% of provincial food banks have reported an increase in demand;
- Port Moody City Council have been proactive in expanding community gardens for growing more food on public land;
- a July 28, 2020 staff report proposed food security project at locations including Pioneer Park, the Arts Centre Victory Garden, and the City Hall entrance and traffic circle;
- staff created a community garden checklist to ensure successful community gardens; the checklist considers solar and water access, accessibility, current use, size of the area, potential for partnerships, and safety considerations; and
- staff are seeking feedback for location selection criteria, other important elements for community gardens, and recommendations for neighbourhood consultation.

Staff noted the following in response to questions from the Commission:

- an annual membership fee payable to the community garden association is required to access a plot of community garden;
- the City created the garden spaces, which are operated by external organizations; there are active waitlists for the gardens, and there is currently no time limit for “owning” a plot of the garden once the space has been awarded;

- there are benefits to planting perennials, flowers, and companion pollinator plants on community plots, and not only food;
- there is a social planning aspect to community gardens as well; groups have been donating local produce grown in community gardens to SHARE;
- Planning staff have been working on a Tri-Cities task force to expand community gardens as it relates specifically to food security;
- plant theft is common in garden beds and community gardens;
- a minimally adequate sized plot would be six feet by three feet; the optimum plot size is eight feet by four feet, with a one-foot planting depth;
- achieving adequate depth is tricky for roof top gardens; raised planters would still allow for needed depth;
- plantings must be in line with the City's Bear Aware strategy;
- community gardens are included in the Sustainability Checklist for developments; there is a lot of interest from strata properties, but not as much demand from single family homes;
- community gardens are one of the essential services in the province during the pandemic;
- the lack of solar access and adequate space are challenges for locating new community garden plots; and
- staff have reviewed a number of parks for potential future garden locations, including Art Wilkinson Park and Knowle Street.

The Commission noted the following in discussion:

- the lack of turnover in community gardens could indicate that the current award system may not be optimal;
- Colony Farm community gardens experiences security issues such as theft;
- consider ways to ensure that community gardens are contributing to food security, such as having requirements around who the gardens are serving and what the intended purposes are;
- consider providing equal accessibility to the plots through lottery by season, requirements of diverse household income, and limiting plot ownership terms;
- the Heritage Garden at the Station Museum has been operating for around 20 years, and has shared food with the Food Bank; the garden experiences security and rodent challenges;
- community gardens should be spread out across the City, being mindful of wildlife attractant and security

issues; the gardens can be rotated around vacant lots across the City;

- the old Fire Hall site could potentially be suitable for community gardens;
- older residents may be able to offer their private properties for community gardens; and
- many easements and pathways that are currently populated with invasive species may be suitable for community gardens, using an approach similar to the “adopt a street” program.

Climate Resilient Landscaping

4.2 Attachment: Client Resilient Landscaping Strategies Presentation

File: 01-0360-20-10

The Parks Superintendent gave a presentation on Climate Resilient Landscaping Strategies, noting the following:

- the City’s Climate Action Plan was endorsed by Council in July 2020, and focuses on mitigation and adaptation to climate change, with actions items to mitigate impact of climate change;
- developing climate resilient landscaping strategies for public lands is one of the Climate Action Plan actions;
- this issue received the most votes from residents during the Climate Action Plan Open House;
- the strategies would prioritize consideration of climate change risks in park designs, and planting resilient native species that create pollinator habitats;
- increase in intensity and frequency of heavy rain events and heat waves is anticipated by 2050;
- impact on landscapes include soil drought and erosion, flooding, the heat island event, and increased air and water pollution;
- goals and objectives include developing climate resilient standards for streetscapes, boulevards, and parks; creating guidelines for developments, and creating adaptable planting palettes;
- there is a pilot project at the Shoreline Trail Sign Bed along Murray Street, as part of the multi-use path renovation; included are three different types of soil designed to be drought tolerant and which provides habitat and biodiversity.

Staff noted the following in response to questions from the Commission:

- many native plants such as yarrow can establish themselves in tougher environments; achieving balance

with a blend of suitable plants is the way forward and the Shoreline Trail pilot project is an example of this;

- with regards to the urban forest interface and wildfire risks, garden beds are maintained and cut back in the fall, and wooden debris will not be kept near the interface; tree type and density are also factors in an interface;
- the Port Moody Fire Department is working with Parks to put together a community wildfire plan, which will be presented by the Fire Department to Commission;
- minimal specs in soil depth are important in landscaping;
- the Parks Superintendent is involved in the Noons Creek House Post project, and can recommend including plants of cultural significance, including medicinal and edible plants, into project charter; and
- guidelines on planting boulevards has been compiled with Engineering Department input, and can be made publicly accessible on the City's website.

The Commission noted the following in discussion:

- it is not imperative to include plants and shrubs in traffic circles and islands, as their locations make them difficult to maintain; and
- as Summers are typically dry in this region, it is a good idea to put in drought resistant plant stock.

COVID-19 Update and Feedback for Summer Season Planning

4.3 Staff provided an update on COVID-19 response in Parks and Recreation and Summer season planning, noting the following:

- staff are currently reviewing issues related to a potentially busy summer season;
- some temporary signage in parks could become permanent signs;
- staff are considering increased access to washrooms, including portable washrooms and accessible washrooms;
- other staff considerations include parking lot hours, the use of Parks ambassadors, and additional signage;
- no ice surfaces will be installed after the winter season is finished; options for arena use could include pickleball courts;
- Spring program registration will begin in one week, with programs operating with current COVID-19 restrictions; it is currently unknown if restrictions will be relaxed; and
- staff are currently planning to be able to open both swimming pools during the Summer.

Staff requested feedback from the Commission regarding park usage during COVID-19, negative park impacts observed over

the past year, design considerations and COVID-19 learnings for future park planning, and potential summer innovations.

The Commission noted the following in discussion:

- top negative park impacts observed over the past year include mask litter, overcrowding and congestion, dog waste litter, overflowing garbage cans, and wrong-way traffic on trails;
- consider retaining one-way use on trails, and consider widening paths;
- the Port Moody area could see large volumes of visitors this summer, especially during the initial rush when the weather improves; consider implementing parking fees and have staff be prepared;
- consider adding portable toilets at Old Orchard Park, including accessible toilets;
- more water/spray parks and sports facilities in other parks may be needed to take pressure off the main parks; and
- consider opening up additional parking lots, such as the Flavelle Mill site, to increase parking for the swimming pool, spray park, and water activities.

**Park and Trail
Naming
90(1)(b)**

4.4 PRC21/005

Moved, seconded, and CARRIED

THAT, pursuant to section 90 of the *Community Charter*, this portion of the Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission be closed to the public as the subject matter being considered relates to the following:

- **90(1)(b) – personal information about an identifiable individual who is being considered for a municipal award or honour, or who has offered to provide a gift to the municipality on condition of anonymity.**

5. Information

Staff Updates

- 5.1 Staff noted that repair work is ongoing at Rocky Point Pier and the boat ramp, and that planning work is underway for future dredging work;

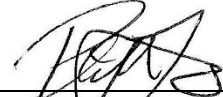
Staff noted that the Shoreline Paved Trail is currently in the design phase.

6. Adjournment

6.1 The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:18pm.



Councillor Hunter Madsen,
Chair



Philip Lo,
Committee Coordinator