

Metro Parks and Greenspaces Advisory Committee
April 4, 2000
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Metro Regional Center

Vice Chair Rick Charriere called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Committee members present, in addition to Charriere, were Bob Akers, Julie Garver, John Griffiths, Sylvia Milne and Mike Reid. Also in attendance were Charles Ciecko, Jim Desmond, Lupine Jones, Ron Klein, Patricia Sullivan, Dave Manhart and Rose Marie Opp.

I. Introductory Comments and Announcements

Ron Klein provided an update on nominations for the five Parks and Greenspaces Advisory Committee vacancies. Both Jim Battan and Jay Hamlin reapplied for their positions and their names have been recommended to Executive Officer, Mike Burton, for nomination. In addition, the recommendation of Dave Manhart to represent District 5 (replacing Mike Reid) has also been forwarded by Metro staff. Manhart's past experience, with a strong emphasis in fund raising, includes positions as development director of Friends of Trees, and as corporate relations manager with the Oregon Zoo Foundation. He presently serves with the Nature Conservancy. These three nominations will be forwarded to Metro Council. If approved, the committee will operate with nine members until the remaining vacancies are filled. No nominations have yet been received for District 1 (formerly Bob Akers) or District 3 (formerly John Griffiths).

II. Special Presentation to Parks Advisory Committee Members

Charles Ciecko, Dept. Director, presented commemorative plaques and offered words of appreciation to retiring committee members Bob Akers, Mike Reid and John Griffiths. As original members of the advisory committee and having served terms as committee chair, the development and accomplishments of the Regional Parks and Greenspaces Dept. were due in no small measure to their efforts. Ciecko added that they have provided extraordinarily valuable advice and have assisted with important advocacy issues before the Metro Council.

IIa. Open Spaces Acquisition Quarterly Report Highlights

Highlights of the quarter ending March 31, 2000 included 11 acquisitions totalling over 700 acres. Especially noteworthy were:

- 1) the 20-acre Schierholz site at Willamette Narrows with 450 ft. of Willamette River frontage, stunning views, a wetland and an unusual and diverse stand of trees,
- 2) an acquisition on the Tualatin River of just under 100 acres, representing a possible future access site and having great potential as a Washington County park,
- 3) a large 332-acre acquisition near Forest Park, a former clear cut piece that surrounds the ancient forest and will act as a buffer and provide access and
- 4) the 7-acre Lakeman site, another in the Forest Park Expansion Target Area, through which the Wildwood Trail runs and which abuts the Pittock Mansion property.

As regional acquisitions approached the 6,000 acre target, Metro Council asked the Dept. to review original target area refinement plans, revisit original goals, compare them with acquisitions to date and identify "essential" properties as well as "desirable" ones. The acquisition of "essential" properties is considered vital to realize the goals of the refinement plans. Specific acreage goals are less important than "heart of the plan" goals which are generally ecological in nature (resource-based) or support needs of access and passive recreation (human-use). "Desirable" properties would greatly enhance

the target area if purchased, but would not diminish the value of other investments already made in the target area, if not acquired. Properties identified as essential or desirable total over \$100 million, nearly triple the remaining funds. Focus continues on the essential properties.

IIIb. Willamette Week "Green Acres" Article

This article, discussed at the last meeting, did not appear to have had significant impact on the public's perception of the acquisition program. Although WW received many letters and other responses in opposition to the article, the feedback Metro received was very positive. The committee provided good direction on this issue, it was noted. Brian Scott's suggestion, in particular, to add Mike Burton's written response to the article to Metro's web page was especially useful. This "exercise in investigative journalism", if nothing else, demonstrated to the Dept. the need to communicate effectively.

IV. FY 2000-01 Regional Parks and Greenspaces Budget

Ciecko reported that the parks budget, after being submitted to the Executive Officer, has progressed to the next stage with a \$200,000 reduction in the unappropriated balance. A proportionate reduction in general fund support was also made in order that other agency priorities could be addressed. In particular, and to a large extent, these will include natural resources planning and goal 5 inventories for both riparian and upland areas, both of which are closely related to park programs. According to Ciecko, Metro Council is aware that the single most challenging issue confronting the Dept. is funding for operations and maintenance. According to Councilor Susan McLain, Finance Committee Chair, an important needs assessment will be performed.

V. Regional and Parks Greenspaces Volunteer Services Report

Lupine Jones, Volunteer Services Manager, presented the 1999 year-end report. Highlights included :

- participation by over 1,200 volunteers who donated over 15,000 hours
- production of a volunteer brochure titled "It's Your Nature"
- expansion of the length of the volunteer naturalist training program to six weeks
- increase in the use of office volunteers - important in the creation and management of a data base which tracks volunteers and hours donated
- addition of ten new crew leaders contributing over 200 hours while leading more than 500 volunteers

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.