



MEMORANDUM

To: Dave Ramsay, City Manager
From: Jennifer Schroder, Director
Date: November 28, 2005
Subject: Planning Process for Saint Edwards State Park

Per the City Council's request, the following is a report on the planning process for a comprehensive plan for Saint Edwards State Park.

Background

After struggling with financial challenges in caring for historic properties in parks around the state, the State Parks Commission in 2004 approved a policy on evaluating and possibly authorizing appropriate public-private partnership agreements. The State Parks staff subsequently began to explore the feasibility of finding private investors to help make currently unstable historic and other buildings available for the public to enjoy. In response to this new policy, a concept letter was submitted by McMenamins, a firm that develops historic properties in Washington and Oregon for modern uses.

The private company's concept letter included ideas such as locating a full-service lodging facility, restaurant, brewpub and other amenities in the seminary building at the park and on nearby grounds. The concept letter states that the public would have access to all non-lodging portions of the building as well as continued access to all existing park amenities, including the swimming pool, gymnasium, trails, children's play structure and playfield.

The Commission has received letters, e-mail and testimony from the public detailing concerns over the McMenamins proposal. Public comments specifically mentioned include seeking other alternative public uses of the seminary, the importance of a public process, traffic on Juanita Drive, concerns about privatization, development of a marina or sale of the park. No marina is proposed, no portion of the park will be sold, and the Commission made clear at its August 4 meeting that State Parks would continue to operate the overall park.

Planning process that will lead to a comprehensive plan for Saint Edwards Park

In early October State Parks staff began a series of public workshops to help prepare a comprehensive plan for Saint Edward State Park, a process the state refers to as CAMP: Classification and Management Planning. The workshops were held on October 11th and 15th. The purposes of the workshops were to identify issues of concern from the public as well as give the public the opportunity to become familiar with the planning process. 19 pages of comments were recorded from the workshops. The next step in the process is for staff to categorize the comments into issue and respond to each issue. Subsequent workshops will be scheduled for the public to review and

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comment on the responses to the issues submitted from the October workshops as well as to review and comment on alternative uses for the park.

According to Bill Koss, State Parks Lands Program Manager, the thrust of the planning process is to hear from park users on their preferences and develop options that incorporate an array of choices prior to preparing a staff recommendation for a comprehensive plan that will help guide future uses and development intensity.

To assist in the planning process State Parks has formed an advisory committee. Members of the committee are:

Alumni: Michael J. Murphy, Washington State Treasurer

Bastyr University: David C. Matteson, Director of Public Affairs

Citizens for Saint Edward State Park: Rebecca Hirt

Denny Creek Neighborhood Association: Patti Anderson

Friends of Saint Edward State Park: To be determined by Friends

Muckleshoot Tribe : Melissa Calvert, Director, Wildlife and Cultural Resources Programs

Trails – cyclist: Tom Fitzpatrick

Trails – pedestrian: Manny Mankowski

Play Fields: Brent Smith

Playground user: Pat Rodgers

Pool: Karl Beall

Saint Edward State Park: Mohammad Mostafavinassab, Park Manager Saint Edward State Park

State Parks and Recreation Commission: Joan Thomas

Union: Bob Doyle, Washington Federation of State Employees

Ex Officio Members: Kenmore city staff, Local elected officials

Once the planning process is completed, the comprehensive plan will be presented to the Commission, which has the authority to approve, modify or deny park comprehensive plans. State Parks staff anticipates having a staff recommendation to the Commission for consideration in the fall of 2006.

Staff will keep City Council informed of when the next public meetings will be held.