



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Houghton Community Council

**From:** Jennifer Schroder, Director

**Date:** March 15, 2012

**Subject:** Recommendation to rename Houghton Beach Park – Doris Cooper Houghton Beach Park

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

For the Houghton Community Council to receive a report on the Park Board's recommendation to rename Houghton Beach Park to **Doris Cooper Houghton Beach Park** after former City Council member and community activist, Doris Cooper.

### **BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:**

At the March 6, City Council Meeting Lynn Stokesbary a Kirkland resident submitted a written request to name Houghton Beach Park after former Council member Doris Cooper. Doris was on the City Council from 1973-1993, and passed away last year, April 29, 2011. Mr. Stokesbary provided an overview of her support for parks during her 20 years of service as a council member.

Per the Naming of Public Parks and Facilities policy (Resolution R-4799) the City Council asked that the Park Board review the request and forward a recommendation to the City Council.

After reviewing the naming policy for parks and facilities, and the letter prepared by Mr. Stokesbary, the Park Board passed a motion to forward to the City Council a recommendation to rename the Houghton Beach Park to the Doris Cooper Houghton Beach Park. The City Council will receive the Park Boards recommendation at their April 17<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.

Attachments: March 6, letter from Nona Ganz, Robert Pantley and Lynn Stokesbary  
Resolution - 4799

**To: Kirkland City Council**  
**From: Nona Ganz, Robert Pantley, Lynn Stokesbary**  
**Date: March 6, 2012**  
**Subject: Park Naming In Honor of Doris Cooper**

### **Recommendation**

To add the name of Doris Cooper to Houghton Beach Park in honor of her sustained and outstanding civic service to the Kirkland park system. Our recommendation is to retain the original name of Houghton Beach Park and add Doris Cooper's name to the sign. A previous example of this was done several years ago when the late Phyllis Needy's name was added to the Houghton Neighborhood Park sign.

In 1985, the Kirkland City Council adopted Resolution R-3215, and later amended in January 2010, establishing policies and procedures for the naming of parks and facilities. In this Resolution the City Council created policy to choose a name for a public park or facility to one of several criteria. One specific criteria that stands out as the basis for honoring Doris Copper is written as follows:

"An individual (living or deceased) who has given outstanding civic service to the Kirkland Park system, or has donated substantial funds or land to the Kirkland park system, or has been otherwise instrumental in the acquisition or development of critical park acreage (e.g., Marsh Park). Parks or facilities shall not ordinarily be named for a living person, unless that person has made a significant and outstanding contribution of land, money, or civic service. A waiting period of at least one year should expire before naming a park or facility under the policy of this subparagraph;"

The timing for naming a park after Doris Cooper is appropriate as we are approaching the first year of her passing, April 29, 2011.

### **Background**

Before Doris Cooper began her 20 year service on the City Council in 1973 she was an active member of the community. Her activities included:

- One of the organizers of the telegram campaign to acquire Houghton Beach Park.
- Committee member to acquire the Yarrow Bay wetlands
- Coordinator of the Moss Bay Celebration
- Houghton Community Council member
- Former Chair and member of the Board of Adjustment
- Active in Lakeview Elementary, Kirkland Junior High, and Lake Washington High School PTA Boards.

In 1973 Doris Cooper was elected to the Kirkland City Council and successfully elected to 5 terms on the Council before retiring at the end of her term in 1993. She was the city's first woman mayor in 1984, a position she held for three consecutive two-year terms. During her time on the Council Doris Cooper was also named the Seattle-King County Municipal League's Outstanding Public Official in 1987 (the Oscars of local government service) and was President of the Suburban Cities Association.

Doris' support of parks planning, acquisition, development, and renovation was unequivocal. Throughout her public service parks were her passion and are what inspired Doris Cooper to run for the Kirkland City Council in 1973. It all began with Doris and her two friends, Judy Frolich, and Delores Teutsch who organized a telegram campaign to acquire funding for acquisition of Houghton Beach Park. In the years that followed Doris played key roles as a coordinator, mastermind, and publicity chairs for the 1976, 1984, 1989, and 1992 Park Bond Measures.

Each of these bond measures resulted in acquiring and/or developing properties critical to the Kirkland parks system and for the quality of life and enjoyment of residents. Often the centerpieces of these bond measures included threatened properties that would otherwise be sold for development or other uses if they were not acquired by the City.

The following summarizes the legacy of park acquisition and development resulting from these 4 Bond Measures for which Doris was so inextricably linked:

#### **1976**

##### **"Bond Kirkland Together"**

- **Waterfront Acquisition**
- **Development of the Senior Center**
- **Acquisition of 29 acre former Juanita Golf Course**

#### **1984**

##### **"A Good Buy or Goodbye!"**

- **Acquisition of the 9.2 acre Waverly Site from the Lake Washington School District (now Heritage Park and home to Heritage Hall)**
- **Acquisition of 17 acres from former Juanita Golf Course**

#### **1989**

##### **"Bond Kirkland Together"**

- **Acquisition of property for City's first Community Center in addition to development of South Juanita Neighborhood Park**
- **Development of Everest Community Park**
- **Development of Crestwoods Community Park**
- **Development of Juanita Bay Park**

- Acquisition and development of Houghton Neighborhood Park
- Acquisition and development of North Rose Hill Neighborhood Park
- Acquisition of South Rose Hill Neighborhood Park
- Open space acquisitions on Forbes Lake

In 1989 King County voters also approved the King County Open Space and Trails Bond Measure which included \$1.7 million for Kirkland to renovate Marina and Houghton Beach Parks, acquisition of additional park land in Juanita Bay Park, and provide trails and wetland viewing boardwalks at Totem Lake.

1992

**“Kirkland’s Pride In Its Parks!”**

- Acquisition of Dr. Burhen property to David E. Brink Park

This \$1.5 measure twice failed at the ballot just shy of the 60% “yes” vote. Despite these setbacks, Doris Cooper, Councilmembers, City staff, and citizens in the community worked hard and successfully to obtain grant and secure other outside funding to purchase the property. The City ended up only paying \$145,000 for the property, a real bargain for 175 feet of prime waterfront property near downtown Kirkland.

Doris Cooper’s dedication to parks was not limited to Bond measures. She was a champion of many other important park acquisition and development projects that were funded through the City’s Capital Improvement Program, State granting agencies, and King County conservation funding programs. If asked, you could always count on Doris to accompany staff in making grant request presentations to outside agencies. She had great instincts and when called upon she always had the right thing to say and it was usually punctuated with a great sense of humor.

Some notable examples of other park related projects include:

- Acquisition of the 36.5 acre Forbes Valley from the McCrory family, representing the largest single purchase of park property in the City’s history. This was a very significant addition to Juanita Bay Park creating a 103.5 acre nature preserve supporting an important plant and wildlife habitat corridor.
- Acquired the 1.5 acre First Summit waterfront property providing the anchor to the north end of Juanita Bay Park.
- Approval of the City Cemetery Master Plan resulting in significant improvements and historic renovations to the cemetery first envisioned by Peter Kirk.

- **Effectively working with King County to build new little league fields at Finn Hill Park for Kirkland National Little League who for years shared fields with Kirkland American Little League at Everest Park. This allowed Kirkland American Little League to grow it's girls program at Everest Park which now proudly hosts the Girl's Junior Softball World Series every year in August.**
- **Many capital improvements to children's playgrounds, trails, docks and shorelines, ballfields, basketball and tennis courts, and indoor facilities such as the Senior Center (now Peter Kirk Community Center) and North Kirkland Community Center.**

In doing our research on Doris Cooper we discovered additional notable accomplishments and recognition for her work in public service. We believe they are significant and important to include in our report:

- Executive Board, Puget Sound Council of Governments
- Chair, King County Solid Waste Management Board
- State Coordinator, Women in Municipal Government
- Campaign Manager, Evergreen Hospital Bond Issue 1978
- Executive Board, Washington Press Association
- Human Services Roundtable
- Woman of Achievement, 1978, Kirkland Business and Professional Women
- Member of Local and Regional Shorelines Committee which established guidelines for adoption by Washington State Department of Ecology

### **Next Steps**

Based on the direction of the City Council we envision the Council referring this park naming request to the Park Board for their review and recommendation perhaps as early as their March or April meetings. Many people that we have talked to would like to see a dedication at Houghton Beach Park this July that not only adds Doris Cooper's name to the park but also celebrates the many others who helped acquire Houghton Beach and turned it into the waterfront gem it is today.

We have also attached a list of local residents, past and present, who support the recommendation of adding Doris Cooper's name to Houghton Beach Park.

Please accept our thanks for considering our recommendation along with others who want to honor a legacy of exceptional public service.

## **Supporters of Park Naming In Honor of Doris Cooper**

Dave and Hazel Russell  
Bob Neir  
Al Locke  
Sants and Sue Contreras  
Michaele Muse  
Mary-Alyce Burleigh  
Paul Hoerlein  
Bob Kamuda  
Barbara Loomis  
Bob Burke  
Loita Hawkinson  
Sue Keller  
Deb Eddy  
Larry Springer  
Norm Storm  
Dolly Turner  
Sherry Grindeland  
Matt Gregory  
Andy Held  
Rick Whitney  
Betsy Pringle  
Rebecca Hirt  
Jill Keeney  
Carolyn Hyak  
Robert Pantley  
Nona Ganz  
Lynn Stokesbary  
Dave Ramsay  
Cindy Zech

# Doris Cooper

Honoring the Legacy



“Doris Cooper deserves a lot of credit. She served her city for more than 30 years –first as a citizen activist instrumental in creating Houghton Beach Park, then as Kirkland’s first woman Mayor, and for 20 years as a city councilmember.”

**Eastside Journal Editorial after Doris Cooper announced that she will retire from the Kirkland City Council at the end of her term.**



*The telegram campaign to purchase oil company sites at Houghton Beach sparked nearly \$500,000 in grants and resulted in this award-winning park.*



**A PROVEN  
LEADER . . .**

*She cares about Kirkland!*