

Magnuson Park Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

October 9, 2024

Attendance

MPAC Members: Samantha De Abreu (co-chair), Jan Bragg (co-chair), Jonathan King, Dave Hudacek, Bladimir Recinos, Nancy Wilder, Virginia Humes, Ruth Fruland

Absent: Aaron Hoard

SPR Staff and Presenters: Kim LeMay, Joanne Orsucci, Kellina Stamm, Danyal Lotfi, Andrea Petzel (Broadview Planning)

Attendees: 4

Welcome and Introductions

De Abreu calls the meeting to order at 5:31 pm.

Members introduce themselves and their constituent groups. Attention is called to the 7:00 PM safety meeting held in Building 47.

Approval of Consent Items

Bragg introduces tonight's consent items: the agenda for tonight's meeting, and the meeting minutes from the September 11, 2024, meeting. Both items are approved unanimously.

Adopted: 9/11/24 MPAC Meeting Minutes

Adopted: 10/9/24 MPAC Meeting Agenda

Announcements & Information Sharing

There are no announcements at this time.

Magnuson Park Off-Leash Area Presentation/Report

Danyal Lotfi, SPR Community Engagement Advisor, and Kellina Stamm, Sr. Capital Projects Coordinator, deliver the report.

Seattle's Off Leash Area (OLA) system dates back to 1997. Some highlights from the presentation were:

- The current 15 fenced OLAs total roughly 28 acres of park land.
- The OLAs range in size from 9 acres to 0.1 acres and are in addition to over 400 parks where leashed dogs are allowed to walk, exercise and have fun.
- Dogs are not allowed at any time on organized athletic fields, beaches, or children's play areas in Seattle parks, per the Seattle Municipal Code.
- Among the top 12 park systems in the country, Trust for Public Land (TPL) ranks Seattle in the top 5 in terms of access to dog parks per capita.

SPR partners with community organizations maintenance of OLAs, including Magnuson Off-Leash Group (MOLG) and Citizens for Off-Leash Areas (COLA). These groups partner with SPR in

- Day-to-day operations of the OLA
- Maintaining a clean and safe environment for OLA visitors
- Recruiting volunteer stewards and organizing work parties
- Educating OLA visitors about rules and etiquette
- Reporting minor and major maintenance needs
- Proposing improvements and new amenities
- Fundraising and sponsorships

SPR staff provide support to OLA volunteer stewards by

- Leading major improvements and installation of new amenities
- Providing materials for work parties when requested
- Regularly emptying dumpsters and trash cans
- Tree assessment and mowing of grass
- Responding to and repairing damages from vandalism
- Reviewing and approving special maintenance projects at OLAs

Magnuson Park's OLA has undergone several recent improvement projects. These include major accessibility improvements, new storage space for volunteer steward needs, and a new "mobi-mat" at the OLA beach (for ADA access to the water).

Lotfi shares sample signage and educational information disseminated by SPR regarding how OLA users and pet owners can best steward SPR parks while enjoying them with their dogs.

Lotfi and Stamm take questions and comments from MPAC members.

- De Abreu asks if SPR has considered instituting limits on the number of dogs brought to OLAs by professional dogwalkers, noting that Marymoor Park has such a limit. Lotfi notes that SPR did a study in 2017, and did learn some lessons from Marymoor. Over the past few years, SPR has worked with Magnuson Off-Leash Group (MOLG) to develop standards for dogwalkers at Magnuson Park.
- Bragg notes that she argued against the creation of the Magnuson OLA, on the grounds that it decreases natural habitat and because the OLA beach was opposed by environmental advocates for salmon habitat preservation.
- Bragg also asks for additional signage at the exits of the OLA reminding pet owners to leash their dogs. Lotfi notes that the OLA has rules posted but recognizes that the area between the OLA and the parking area remains a consistent area of concern. Stamm adds that the sign at the entrance nearest the sports meadow was just replaced
- Bragg advocates to keep the following procedures in place: no artificial lighting towers in the OLA, and no glass/transparent plexiglass siding on any structures in the OLA. Lotfi assures Bragg that there is not and has never been any plan for either of these developments.

Magnuson Park Manager's Report

Joanne Orsucci, Interim Magnuson Park Manager, delivers the report. See below.

Broadview Planning Update

Petzel shares a brief update on the community outreach work being performed by Broadview Planning pursuant to BVP's ongoing study on Magnuson Park's management model.

Magnuson Community Center Report

Kim LeMay, Magnuson Community Center Coordinator, delivers the report.

The Magnuson Haunted House is 10/25-26 from 5:00-10:00 PM. This is a SCARY haunted house! Admission is \$6 and MCC is again partnering with Broadway Bound Children's Theatre for this event. MCC does give free admissions to children for the haunted house.

Youth basketball leagues are now registering for ages 8-17. Cost is \$130 with scholarships available. Fees include practices, weekly games, and jerseys.

De Abreu emphasizes accessibility for BVP team at haunted house event; not all families at Mercy and Solid Ground celebrate Halloween. Petzel notes and thanks De Abreu.

Old Business

Bragg provides update on communication with SDOT and progress:

- New crosswalk striping across NE 74th St at 62nd Ave NE, complete with photo op for the SDOT website (Bragg will forward photo to MPAC members)
- SDOT representative observed rapid traffic in the park and ordered speed study for SDOT roads in Sand Point
- MPAC members discuss speed strips, etc. on NE 65th St, NE 74th St, 62nd Ave NE, and 63rd Ave NE

Pickleball

- Input continues to come in from public to MPAC regarding pickleball site proposal for E5 parking lot
- MPAC members discuss formally advocating for limiting or reducing the number of pickleball courts in the proposal
 - Bragg, King, Humes, and Fruland advocate for a delay, a reduction in the number of proposed courts, or both
 - Concerns raised include noise, increased use rate, safety concerns, and inclusion of alternate sites in proposal
- De Abreu hopes that there will be additional community engagement but is not sure whether she would oppose proposal at this point
- Humes notes that perhaps expansion with this new project should wait until public safety concerns abate

New Business

The annual cyclocross race is October 20; no race map has yet been posted.

Request for after-hours maintenance and Park Ranger call line: (206) 684-7250

Upcoming discussion of MPAC priorities and leadership at next several meetings.

Wrap-Up

Co-chairs adjourn the meeting at 6:46 PM.

Topic	Updates/Notes
MPAC Priority #1: Healthy People • Infrastructure and Lighting • Improve safety and reduce crime	Ongoing Security Concerns Phoenix Security locks the gates located on NE 65th St and beyond that the gate to Lake Shore Drive. They announce gate closure via loudspeaker and also check restrooms for negative activity. SPR, SPD, City Council, Mayor Harrell, etc. have all received reports of very loud parties near the boat launch at Magnuson Park. SPR addressed this by closing the large gate across NE 65th St, but the gate and locks were cut a few times. SPD had a presence onsite in a mobile precinct vehicle and the complaints have stopped, so we are hopeful the activity has stopped. This is not an issue that Rangers typically address due to safety issues. Rangers are not first responders and don't address criminal activity. They typically address situations that involve Parks Code violations and try and prevent some situations from escalating. For anything that needs an immediate response, please continue to call 9-11. Park hours remain 4:00am – 11:30pm, but the gates to the Boat Launch and Lake Shore Drive are closing from 10:00pm – 4:00am. One new sign is posted just past (20 feet?) the gate on NE 65th St. SFD/SPD have keys to locks used on these gates. No plan for summer 2025 gate closures is developed yet. SPR sent out a notice about a community engagement session Sept 5 at the Community Center regarding Pickleball Design projects. If you'd like to provide feedback, please email kevin.bergsrud@seattle.gov before September 13, 2024.

MPAC Priority #2: Healthy Environment • Address event-related traffic. • Addressing garbage/litter + animal waste in the park.	Continue to recommend that MPAC members collect some data (informally) that describes the impacts of events on park traffic circulation. Dates, delay times, traffic observations are important data points to describe a potential problem and demonstrate frequency and impact. Joanne connected with Lisa Nielsen, Parks Event and Athletic Scheduling Manager regarding follow-up from 2023 MPAC presentation. 1. As part of the Safe Routes to School program, SDOT is working on improving the sidewalks at NE 65th St and 62nd Ave NE. 2. The First World Flight Centennial on Sept 28, 2024 could have significant impacts on park traffic from 9am-6pm that day. The event is engaged in traffic planning and coordinating with the City of Seattle Special Events office, SPD and SDOT. They have reached out to a number of tenants directly. Expect delays and congestion.
MPAC Priority #3: Strong Communities • Improve Communication within Magnuson Park + surrounding community. • Inclusive and communicative planning.	Sent out some general information resources in July to the co-chairs to help guide MPAC members to general park operations questions and other resources.
MPAC Roster and Recruiting	No further interest in joining MPAC from business tenants. John Bower has resigned from MPAC. John represented Seattle Public Schools

Seattle Parks Updates	Budget issues: The City's hiring freeze continues and the normal team of 4 at Magnuson Admin Office is currently a team of 2 staff. We appreciate your understanding as we prioritize tenant operations work and put other projects on hold as we navigate this hiring freeze. Mayor Harrell announces his budget Sept 24, 2024. The budget will indicate what cuts are planned for SPR and more will be known about impacts at that time. (In response to a question from MPAC) Building 2: RFP is being worked on as time allows. Tenant renewals: License agreement renewed with Outdoors for All in Bldg 406, SPACE in Bldg 30 and 138 and Cascade Bicycle Club. Meridian Geographics coming soon.
MPAC Updates	What are the current issues that the MPAC group is working on?

Park Ranger Data Tracking - Magnuson Park

June - September 2024

- 589 - Number of People Contacted at the Park Location
- 51 - Positive Engagement with the public
- 20 - Negative Encounters with the public (mostly when giving Verbal Warnings)
- 22 - De-escalation Incidents that Reduced a 911 Call
- 49 Verbal Warnings given to achieve Voluntary Compliance to SPR Park Codes and Rules.
Examples: (32) - Animals running at large prohibited, (4) - Camping in the park, (4) - Motor-powered watercraft prohibited in certain areas, (7) - Restrictions on uses of vehicles in the park, (1) - Sale of merchandise, Concession contract required, (1) - Speeding in park.
- Park Rangers found a dog just sitting by himself with a harness and leash on but none threatening - a bag of clothes and a Pepsi next to the dog. Rangers looked around for the dog's owner - the dog lead the Rangers to his owner's tent but no owner, so Rangers called Animal Control to take it from there, we were with the dog for 2 hours and still no owner. The dog is now safe with Animal Control.
- Park Rangers called in Parking Enforcement for assistance to deal with illegally parked cars blocking boat ramp.

- Park Rangers found illegal parking on the access road to boat ramp, requested Parking Enforcement for assistance.
- Park Ranger arrived at the boat ramp, a man in his truck and boat trailer complaining about the cars parked in the boat trailer tie down area taking up all the spaces, Rangers called Parking Enforcement for assistance.