

FRIENDS OF THE PARKS COMMISSION

Monday, February 9, 2009

Public Services Training Room

55 Portland Street

5:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE:

Commission Members: Kirk Goodhue, Steven Morgenstein, Jaime Parker

Friends of Eastern Promenade: Diane Davison

Friends of Deering Oaks Park: Barbara Hager

Friends of Evergreen Cemetery: David Little

Land Bank: Roger Berle

Deering Center Community Gardens: Elizabeth Tarasevich, Naomi Mermin

City Staff: Mike Bobinsky, Tom Civiello, Rick Knowland, Melissa Graffam

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 p.m.

Kirk Goodhue was asked by Mike Bobinsky to be the Chairperson for the Commission. He agreed.

Councilor Dory Waxman sent her apologies for not being able to attend this meeting due to a Council Workshop being held at the same time. She had suggested to the Commission that Monday nights will not work for her, due to Council Meetings and Workshops. The Commission is looking to move this meeting to the second Thursday of the month, at 5pm. The Friends of the Park Commission members will be polled to see if this time works for everyone.

Starting next month the Commission will have a new member; Diane Davison has been appointed to the Friends of the Park Commission. Welcome as an official member, Diane!

OLD BUSINESS

The Commission did not have a quorum and was not able to accept the meeting minutes from December 2008 and January 2009.

NEW BUSINESS

Roger Berle - Pine Grove Park

Roger Berle spoke to the Commission on behalf of the Land Bank Commission regarding property adjacent to the Pine Grove Park, which they would like to acquire and then include it in the Park.

Roger gave some background information about the Land Bank Commission and it is currently in its 9th year. Currently they have acquired about a dozen properties already. They have a list of 40 others; some are in process or up for discussion. The goal of the Land Bank is to keep land preserved, and should not have any structures on it (no buildings, playgrounds, etc).

What the Land Bank will be acquiring would add 2.5 acres to the already 6.5 acres that Pine Grove Park is currently. This land is house lots that the City currently owns. The Land Bank would like to see the land added to this Park and to have it become a conservation easement.

Jaime Parker asked what the City's obligations are once this is included into the park. Roger said that this had been something that they have been talking about in the Land Bank meetings over the last 6 months. They would like have a possible stewardship.

Since the Friends of the Park Commission did not have a quorum to vote on this request, it will be placed on next months agenda to make a recommendation.

Deering Center Community Gardens

Elizabeth Tarasevich and Naomi Merman passed out a handout to everyone outlining the background, plan and phases of their proposal for a Deering Center Community Garden at Evergreen Cemetery (This is attached).

Elizabeth noted that they would like to lease this area for three (3) to five (5) years. They understand that if the Cemetery was to need that land, then they would need to vacate.

They have also been looking into grants for this. Jaime Parker noted that Portland Trails has applied for grants for that area and was turned down. Elizabeth said that maybe if they work together on this they could be a stronger unit.

Again, since the Friends of the Park Commission did not have a quorum to vote on this request, it will be placed on next months agenda to make a recommendation.

OTHER BUSINESS

Status Report on Vacancies

Currently the Commission still has two vacant seats open. As mentioned, Diane Davison will become a member at March's meeting.

Discussion about Reorganizing the Membership of the Friends of the Park Commission

Mike Bobinsky went over a handout (attached to minutes) about possible ideas for reorganizing the commission.

The next meeting of Friends of the Parks is Thursday, March 12, 2009 at Portland Public Services at 55 Portland Street in the Training Room at 5:00 p.m. Since the main office door closes at 4:30, members will need to enter the building from our rear entrance.

Meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Graffam
Executive Assistant