



WHISTLER

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF RECREATION LEISURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2019, STARTING AT 3 P.M.

In the Flute Room

4325 Blackcomb Way, Whistler, BC V8E 0X5

PRESENT:

Manager, Resort Parks Planning, RMOW, M. Pardoe
Recreation Manager, RMOW, R. Weetman
Parks Planner, RMOW, Annie Oja
Member at Large, Chair, J. Chuback
Member at Large, A. Ross
Member at Large, D. Clark
Member at Large, L. Harnish
Member at Large, M. Lunn
Councillor, Ralph Forsyth
Tourism Whistler representative, M. Kunza

REGRETS:

Member at Large, K. Paterson
Member at Large, D. Ziff
Sea to Sky School District 48 representative, I. Currie
Whistler Sports Legacies representative, Co-Chair, R. Soane

Meeting called to order at 3:05 pm

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by R. Forsyth
Seconded by L. Harnish

Additions to the agenda Recreation Trails Strategy, MPSC Updates, Tennis Centre Signage.

That Recreation Leisure Advisory Committee adopt the regular Recreation Leisure Advisory Committee agenda of June 6, 2019.

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by R. Forsyth
Second by A. Ross

That Recreation Leisure Advisory Committee adopt the Regular Recreation Leisure Advisory Committee minutes of March 14, 2019.

CARRIED

PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS

Staff provided a brief overview of the Master Plan process and facilitated a high level workshop.

Phase 1 “Assessing” has been completed.

Phase 2 “Imagining” is currently underway. Amenities distribution mapping has been completed, along with an internal staff workshop (similar to today’s workshop). Working towards a June 17, 2019 public open house and online survey. Following the open house will develop preferred directions, priorities, timing, order of magnitude costing, and further community engagement.

Phase 3 “Designing” will advance higher priority items and will include additional engagement.

Today focussing on busier major parks - taking a critical evaluation of existing park programming and consider alternatives ideas, in context of the entire park system. No alternative ideas are set in stone, but rather are intended to spark healthy conversation.

Parks Master Plan
Update and Workshop

Rainbow Park

Known Issues:

- Extremely busy
- Parking issues
- Newly acquired lands to SW
- Popular dog off leash but in prime waterfront area
- Poor lawn drainage.

Alternative Ideas:

- Expand and upgrade beach area to something not currently offered in Whistler;
- Add nature trail and large dock off newly acquired parcel;
- Vehicle parking improvements including drop off/turnaround, organized, paving Alta Lake Rd on street parking;
- Relocate picnic shelter;
- Create an entry plaza;
- Relocate dog off leash area to NW;
- Increase creek flow under RR tracks through park to increase freshwater flow to Lake;
- Valley Trail connection to Alta Lake Road;
- Relocate sand volley ball to another park and convert to lawn space.

- More trees for shade.

Questions

- Do we ever ask users what their primary reason for going to Rainbow Park is? If we knew this we could better understand opportunities to redistribute people elsewhere. Typically we rely on staff observations and may consider this moving forward.
- Are we trying to make changes to maintain the park, or are we trying to make changes to increase or decrease capacity? Do we want more people to go there? Is it better to distribute overall funds so can disperse people across the park system? Generally the intent is to better manage and distribute demand.
- What about environmental issues? We have not filtered ideas through an environmental lens. At this time we are seeking to generate feedback on the public's appetite for particular ideas, which will then get pared down to something more manageable. At that time we will engage with an environmental consultant to better understand environmental issues and feasibility (or not) moving forward.
- Is the swimming ok where the new large dock would be off the newly acquired lands? Could be a sun tanning dock rather than a swimming dock
- Should the parks be more age/activity/destination appropriate? Somewhat self-monitoring currently.
- Is there a preference to direct guests to all parks or select parks? To major resort parks, leaving other spaces for community/neighbourhood uses. Many neighbourhood parks not capable of accommodating guests.

Support For:

- Leaving all volleyball courts intact, could be shifted NW to free up a bit of space;
- Valley Trail connection to Alta Lake Rd;
- Dogs need containment/fencing from lawn and water edge to protect it;
- Parking improvements including Alta Lake Rd to make it safer for people to get from Road to Park;
- Move dog off leash area as far away as possible;
- Add human only swim dock in human only swim area (like Alpha Lake Park) and leave dog off leash where it is; and
- Increasing sand area and quality

Comments/Discussion:

- Prefer ideas that address immediate and most recognizable problem of volume/demand.
- Support behavioural change away from vehicle use (and parking), including pay parking, shuttle, park and ride (bike or transit).
- Caution adding elements that make Rainbow Park more of a destination than it already is, and shift some elements elsewhere to reduce demand.
- The Park cannot be everything for everybody.

Meadow Park

Known Issues:

- Not very busy
- Spray park is at the end of its life
- Baseball fields are undersized and underutilized
- Drainage is in poor condition and is failing
- Fields see lots of dog/owner use

Alternative Ideas:

- Remove one baseball diamond and create an informal play and event space;
- Expand the waterfront and picnic area;
- Add a nature play area and upgraded water park;
- Re-route the Valley Trail;
- Expand multi-sport court;
- Naturalized dog off-leash area;
- Nature trail with river access;
- Connect back parking lot to arena parking;
- Picnic, nature play, outdoor exercise area;
- Tennis courts;
- Multi-sport field;
- Retain baseball

Comments/Discussion:

Baseball

- Not enough ball diamonds in summer?
- Youth baseball don't want to see diamonds go away. Weeknight's softball at Spruce Grove is oversubscribed and could use a 4th diamond.
- If retain one field the field closest to the washroom is optimal (sun orientation). Blinding on the other field.
- Fences not far enough out for >13yo. Currently OK for little league. If make bigger softball still unlikely use to use as very important to have social energy all together at Spruce Grove.
- Smaller baseball diamond and multi-sport appeals to younger families but could accommodate older users

Water Splash Park

- Fear taking the splash park away. Great family place. Suggest it be redeveloped.
- Staff advised there are typically two types of water splash parks: Single use (once-through) water or recirculating. Latter is what most municipalities are doing now but with an approximate 30% cost premium. Replacing the existing area is approximately a \$1.0m capital cost, approx. 30% more than a once-through system. A recirculating system also requires daily staff monitoring/servicing – basically it considered an outdoor pool. If recirculating may make more sense to locate closer to MPSC to facilitate easier maintenance/servicing.

Nature Play

- Nature play near the River not a great fit –safety/observation

Nature Trail

- Not a great fit with golf course – course is actually very close and has potential winter trespass issues. Prefer not to encourage it.

Dog Off Leash Area

- This is very important and necessary.
- Rather than dogs accessing River of Golden Dreams what about accessing water in the pond behind MPSC? Dog owners tend to outnumber other park users (other than water play). Diamond closer to MPSC is more of dog run area not a waterfront access point for dogs – edge of river is quite steep. Don't have dogs cross Valley Trail as it will be a conflict. A water feature for dogs would be ideal.
- When ball diamonds are booked and can't keep people and their dogs off.
- A proper dog off leash area at Meadow may help reduce demand at Rainbow Park.

Rear Parking Lot

- Support parking lot connection to main parking lot, keeps people out of the neighbourhood.
- Demand challenges with main MPSC parking lot. Opening rear area from main parking area would be useful in reducing from true Sports Centre demand. But may increase wait times getting out of MPSC onto northbound highway 99. Consider traffic implications with MOTI.

Riverfront

- Expanded waterfront would be very desirable.
- Support expanding riverfront.

Other

Jogging Track

- What about adding a jogging or running trail around the park? Would add a complementary activity and make park more interesting.
- Jogging track doesn't have to be a 400m race/running track. 200m, 600, 1000m. Track is a great fit with MPSC. Needs to be a crushed gravel or rubberized surfaced trail not asphalt, not VT. Add measurements signs. Not a bike trail. Separate from VT.

More basketball/multi-sport courts

Busyness/Atmosphere

- Meadow Park is very quiet, part of its charm.
- If Park becomes too busy then defeats the desire to experience nature and get away from the business in Whistler. Any new activity needs to be 'fit' within the character of the park.
- At Meadow Park family-oriented options make sense.

Spruce Grove

Known Issues:

- Busy ball diamonds
- Good parking capacity
- Noise conflict with neighbours
- Waldorf School

- Floodplain restrictions/creek setbacks
- Underutilized playground

Alternative Ideas:

- Assumes Waldorf has relocated off site;
- Add 4th diamond;
- Improved turnaround pick-up drop off at entry;
- Relocate community gardens in front of fieldhouse building;
- Create a lost lake trail head;
- Add nature trail;
- More family/neighbourhood park area;
- Dog off leash;
- Expand ball diamonds by 25' to make standard size;
- Add VT along dyke (Spruce Grove)

Comments/Discussion:

Valley Trail along Dyke

- This was a huge issues during RLMP. No support from neighbourhood, as well as White Gold.

Fourth Ball Diamond

- Support 4th ball diamond, especially if one diamond lost at Meadow Park. Would also improve tournament opportunities.

Existing Ball Diamonds

- Insufficient fields in summer – adult and youth schedule conflict.
- Is there a daytime activity that can occur here when the fields are not being used? Seems wasteful when not in use.

Lost Lake Trailhead

- Good idea, would help with distribution and relieve Lot 5 pressures.

Dog off leash

- What is policy for dog use and fields? Policy has been OK to run dogs when sport fields not in use, deeply engrained. In order to be successful in changing this that may require bylaw change but also require a quality dog off leash experience nearby.
- Proximity to Whistle Animals Galore equates to considerable dog off leash use at Spruce Grove. A dog off leash area needs to be as close to WAG as possible as people release dogs from leash as soon as possible.
- Explore other amenities that can make a dog park attractive.

Community Garden Relocation

- Support shift in location for increased profile.

Nature Trail

- Don't need to build trails everywhere. Not necessarily interested in developing something that does not address demand/capacity issues but does add ongoing operating costs.

Neighbourhood Park Amenities

- Support more neighbourhood feel with multi-sport court, playground, dog of leash, picnic, pickleball specific courts.

Other

Tennis

- Having a centre with a number of courts adds social opportunities and greater likelihood of building skills. Is there a way to create a better outdoor tennis centre? Myrtle Philip has four courts, how does that work in this regard.

Fitzsimmons Creek

- Can there be a small beach park access developed along Fitzsimmons Creek?

Jogging Track

- Would work better at Meadow Park.

Lost Lake Park

Known Issues:

- Very busy, closest to Village, high number of visitors
- Prime event space
- Migratory Toads conflicts
- Washrooms over subscribed

Alternative Ideas:

- Treed area between Event space and park lawn area – picnic in the woods opportunity
- Re-envisioning the warming hut – summer use?
- Pier/dock opportunity

Comments/Discussion:

Pier/Dock

- Like this idea, should be explored further.

Wooded Picnic Area

- Nice to have shaded picnic area opportunity but needs better sight lines. Would provide additional capacity.

Access/Parking

- Like current set up with shuttle option of walk in.

Washroom capacity

- People changing use toilet stall instead of the open change area? Quite possibly.

Warming Hut

- Make it an open-air structure? Seasonally removable windows? Re-envisioning is needed.

Other:

It is an amazing park.

Other locations around the lake provide opportunities?

Not focussing on this at this time – will record ideas though.

Parkhurst

Known Issues:

- Parking – do we want any? Some potential locations identified. One idea is on Cougar Mountain side of highway with highway crossing which could serve as a trailhead for Parkhurst, Ancient Cedars, Kill Me Thrill Me.
- Or is it a no vehicle access park – access instead by VT and S2S.
- Evaluate existing trails – Likely through the Trails strategy/Master plan?
- Highway and railway are very limiting.

Alternative Ideas:

- Day use opportunities;
- Parking opportunities;
- Valley Trail connection opportunity;
- Water access opportunity;
- Interpretive trails opportunity;
- Sea to Sky Trail connection

Comments/Discussion:

Constraints

- Green Lake quite underutilized with road on one side and RR on the other.

Day Use Area

- An amazing location – most beautiful.
- There is a strong current as the lake narrows and begins transforming into a river. Swimming probably not a great idea here.

History

- If exploring the historical opportunities (and attracting guests) then likely need some parking.

Trails

- Already has decent trail access via Sea to Sky Trail. If the Valley Trail could access Parkhurst it would make a fine loop.
- An amazing loop would be to connect onto One Duck Lake.
- Need to first achieve trail connections then parking to support it.

Parking

- Concerned about risk of illegal camping. Has been an issue off and on for the last few years.
- If it's a beautiful place you will need some parking. Walking some distance is ok.
- People park on highway – can the shoulder be reduced so people are further discouraged to park on the highway? Requires a sticks and carrots solution.

Wayside Park

Known Issues:

- Boathouse/concession building is beyond repair.
- Access challenges off the highway
- Limited parking

- Alternative Ideas:
 - Floating building
 - Additional dock space
 - Either eliminate parking or move to transit stop only or restricted (drop off) only (like Lost Lake Park).

Comments/Discussion:

Boathouse/Concession Building

- Support redeveloping this. Not sure if floating or on land.

Parking

- Accessible only parking.
- People already parking on highway shoulder.
- Support Lost Like style parking (drop off and limited hours) as long as have plan to keep parking off of off highway

Dave Clark left the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

Alpha Lake Park

Known Issues:

- Popular dog park
- Lacks Valley Trail connectivity
- Parking issues

Alternative Ideas:

- Re-route Valley Trail;
- Plaza/patio seating;
- Expanded nature play area;
- Expand beach

Comments/Discussion:

Valley Trail Realignment

- Support this to make lawn continuous and not divided

Beach Expansion

- Support expanding and upgrading the beach area

Further information and materials are on the project website whistler.ca/outsidevoice.

Staff provided an update on development of the E-bike policy. Moving forward with what was presented as draft directions at the March Open House and online survey. Part of the intent of the Policy is to provide guidance to the community about the use of responsible products on our trails system and responsible behaviour.

E-Bike Policy

Further information on the project website whistler.ca/ebike

Question

What is the penalty for an infraction in the Parks Bylaw? Currently up to \$10,000.

RLAC reviewed the following recommendation:

Moved by A. Ross
Second by R. Forsyth

Whereas C2 and C3 e-bikes are considered motor vehicles as per senior government policies and therefore are not permitted on the VT or formally established off-road recreational trails, the RLAC supports the draft RMOW e-bike policy direction to:

1. Allow only C1 e-bikes on the VT and on all formally established off-road recreation trails except:
 - o Hiking only trails
 - o Above the Flank Trail, and
 - o Emerald Forest (other than "Access Road" connecting Lorimer Rd to Alta Lake Rd).
2. Subject to
 - a. Deployment of emerging plans related to communications, safety and monitoring;
 - b. Updating of relevant municipal Bylaws; and
 - c. Committee review at season's end.

CARRIED

Staff provided an update on these two topics.
Alpine Trails webpage has been significantly updated. Whistler.ca/alpine trails Have Completed phase 1 Grizzly Bear Habitat Assessment in 2018. Grizzly Bear Human Conflict Mitigation Strategy and Response Plan in development. Working through an updated draft with input from Committees and other external feedback. Looking to have plan mostly in place for summer alpine trail season opening typically mid – July.

Grizzly Bears and
Alpine Trails Update

How limit number of users? Challenging in our situation. Other oft cited examples have fewer trail access points and different jurisdictional characteristics (single land manager, greater resources, more singular mandate). Focus this year is collecting data to better inform decisions. Ability and knowledge level of trail users is important.

Annie Oja left the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Meadow Park Sports
Centre – General
Updates

Seasonal facility shut down August 18. Partial facility reopening September 4 2019. Full reopening (pool) September 24. Shutdown may be impacted by HVAC replacement, which is currently out to tender.

Cardio room expansion. Contract award recommendation of \$1.4m at Council on June 11, 2019. An important project for the community and for recreation in Whistler. Very beneficial to persons doing rehab in our community, highly desirable for older population. Will not be bookable for classes and only available for the public. Funded from recreation reserve and private donation (\$400,000)

A resolution was made to support the contract award as presented by Roger Weetman.

Moved by A. Ross
Second by R. Forsyth

CARRIED

OTHER BUSINESS

Signage to Tennis Centre

Can the Tennis Centre be added to Valley Trail signage near Northlands/Village Gate Boulevard? Municipality needs to ensure organizations represented on municipal signs is fair and equitable, and that adding one does not set a precedent for dozens of others. If the request is for advertising for the Tennis Centre then that responsibility lies with the Tennis Centre. Difference between wayfinding and advertising.

Recreation Trails Strategy

Deferred to next meeting.

NEXT MEETING

July 11, 2019 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule:
To be determined at next meeting.

Future Topics:
Recreation Trails Strategy
Recreation Facility Tours

TERMINATION

Moved by L. Harnish
Second by A. Ross

That Recreation Leisure Advisory Committee terminated the June 6, 2019 Recreation Leisure Advisory Committee meeting at 5:05 p.m.

CARRIED

Chair, J. Chuback