



# South Anchorage Sports Park (SASP) Master Plan Update Advisory Group Meeting #1



February 11, 2014 • Spenard Recreation Center

---

## **Attendees:**

Bob Hoffman, Betty Hertz, Ken Best, Neil Koeniger, Birgitta Kytte, Nancy Beardsley, Steve Beardsley, Deanna Montagna, Willie Paul, Richard Mystrom, Todd Glidewell, Sara Wilson-Doyle, Steve Rafuse, Jon Petrunic.

## **Overview Notes:**

The meeting began with introductions from all the attendees and was followed by an introduction to the South Anchorage Sports Park project by Parks & Recreation Park Planner Steve Rafuse. Steve explained the goal of this meeting was to revise the existing Master Plan to better serves the south Anchorage community. Steve explained this was the first of three advisory committee meetings and expressed how important it is for this advisory group to express any concerns, ideas, or expectations early in this process. Parks & Recreation and USKH will then analyze all feedback to develop a series of concept plans for this Park. These concept plans will be presented to the advisory committee and then further refined as during each subsequent meeting. Steve Rafuse also provided a brief history of how this park and its association between adjacent land properties.

Members of the advisory group asked how the plan will be adopted. Steve Rafuse and Sara Wilson Doyle both explained that these meetings will help shape an updated Master Plan that will need to be submitted for review and approval by the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Planning & Zoning Commission. Both these commissions may make recommendations that may modify the Advisory Group's proposed plan.

The meeting continued with Sara Wilson Doyle reviewing feedback from recently conducted stakeholder interviews. This began a larger discussion in which each committee member shared their experiences with the park, expressed their thoughts and concerns, and discussed what improvements are most desirable for future development.

## **Summary of individual comments from advisory committee members:**

Steve Beardsley (Old Seward/Oceanview CC)

- The park should be a multi-use park, develop paved and/or gravel trails around the park, the irrigation pond needs some work or it needs to be removed, the boundaries of the unleashed dog park should be better establish (with fences) and not the entire park, stop dumping Campbell Lake residue or other Municipal waste materials in the park.

Nancy Beardsley (Old Seward/Oceanview CC)

- The park should be a destination – a multi-use park with a reason to go to it, develop more trails, link park and trails to Klatt Bog with a boardwalk into the wetlands, define an area for radio

controlled cars, fence in dog park, prioritize other amenities before sewer and water, pump track is an interesting amenity, consider creating a pond as an attractive amenity, no more dumping.

Deanna Montagna (Dimond West Little League)

- Water for ball fields is a priority, electricity is a good addition, add trails, focus on providing ADA access throughout the park, paved trails

Bob Hoffman (Bayshore/Klatt CC)

- Unpaved gravel trails are preferred to paved trails, add covered areas for families, make the park a unique park, do not put dog park in front (and center) of park – better in an area with less potential for user conflicts, no more dumping (tree lot or Campbell Lake sediment), pump track is good, snow machining area for training kids, CIRI Health Club (great adjacent use next door), bring in utilities (electric and water), add bathrooms and concession stands.

Betty Hertz (Bayshore Neighbor and Park User)

- Move dog park to a safe location – possibly the northwest corner of the park, a dedicated area for canine field work and training, dog events and training area, trails for people and dogs, develop a pond with clean water for dogs, create open usable space (similar to Cuddy Family Midtown Park), pump track, better access from adjacent neighborhoods, provide more variety of activities, keep the park multi-use.

Neil Koeniger (Animal Control Advisory Board)

- Priority is water for existing facilities “3/4 of current users could benefit from water”, provide access to water for dog users, good property for a dog agility course and trials training near the wetlands, gravel walking trails (pavement is not healthy for dogs), provide a fenced area for off-leash dogs with dual entrance and exits (similar to Arctic Benson) to discourage conflicts with other dogs and park users

Ken Best (Anchorage Radio Operated Racing Association)

- Water to keep dust down (non-potable is okay), could always use additional dirt and clean fill (clay is ideal) for RC track, add lighting to discourage undesirable activity at night, add dumpsters, the RC track is in a good spot and they currently have enough space, add bollards to keep road vehicles off the radio control car course, a more permanent status for use at the park is desired.

Todd Glidewell (907 Paintball)

- Add water and lighting, close security gates at night, ability to build a semi-permanent structure as a storage facility and concessions for permit holders (or allow permit holders to build semi-permanent structures), do something about the mosquitos, better defined area for the dog park. Note: Todd Glidewell is open to moving to a different park if he were able to be located in an area with trees. He also would like the option to park/store clean-up equipment for his facility.

Richard Mystrom (Parks and Recreation Commissioner)

- Increased casual use of the park (create a pleasant place to go even when there are not activities going on), remediate soil for dog park (dog areas become muddy in spring and fall), infrastructure

utilities (water, electric) to help user groups take care of the park, add walking trails to connect areas within the park

Willie Paul (American Legion Baseball)

- Water for irrigation from a better source (they currently use water from the irrigation pond which is like spraying mosquitos on the field), promote more activity and user groups in the park, add more walking trails, create a dedicated area for dogs

Birgitta Kytte (CIRI)

- Add utilities, lights will help discourage undesirable activities at night, utilize community patrols, activities for all, develop areas/activities for kids and families to play while other kids are playing sports, add a pavilion, have dumpsters available

#### **General discussion and feedback items include:**

- Residents want SASP to be a special attraction, especially given the large acreage and the limited number of larger parks in south Anchorage. This would include multi-use: “The more users the better” and not exclusive use by regional special uses. Maybe even re-name the park (South Anchorage Community Park?)
- Create a destination. As is, residents need more of a reason to go to the SASP.
- Maintain good relationships between park users.
- The park has some trail and sidewalk links that need to be strengthened, there is limited bus access (nearest bus stop is at Fred Meyer on Dimond Blvd) and most users must drive.
- Bike connections to/from the park and neighborhoods should be enhanced.
- Regional population is growing. Some park uses can be supported elsewhere, including the use of HLB lots (example of Frisbee golf).
- Add signage showing park rules and a map showing the user areas
- Control access to Tower Rd to prevent further dumping
- Add a pavilion that is easily visible near the front of the park
- Provide more security for the park (gates with keyed access for permit holders)
- Do not remove the Traffic Light from the intersection of Timberline Drive and W Klatt Rd.
- Can existing soccer fields be improved to allow for safe use in the future? What are the constraints in terms of costs and engineering?
- Add a trail around the park
- Better define the dog park and fence in the area to prevent conflicts between user groups.

#### **Next Meeting – Consensus Items:**

- Create concepts to present to the committee with a cost menu (i.e. “What can we get for \$2 Million?”).
- Retain traffic light, address access to Tower Rd.
- Extend irrigation from CIRI’s development site as a priority; discontinue irrigation pond (but don’t only spend \$ on this – the community wants something to show for legislative grant)
- Make it impossible for SASP to be used as a city storage/organic waste dump by enhancing and activating (although as land is surcharged with gravel, allow temporary uses if appropriate).

- Active attractive multi-use zones in a few key, high visibility areas.
- Incorporate and enhance these uses:
  - **Trail access network:** Create a loop around the park and a number of trail connections. Primarily make paths gravel to support low-impact healthy exercise activities. Also, because of Klatt Bog wetland title restrictions, this site must support parking and a trailhead for bog access (e.g., boardwalk, interpretive, dog training, and winter recreation like skijoring).
  - **Sports Fields:** Retain and enhance fields with irrigation. Represent multiple sports (baseball, little league, soccer but do not expand fields to cover the entire site (for example, this may not be the best site for more soccer given unused fields in town and new Kincaid capacity). In one central place create a concession zone with electricity and water, and for all fields, especially little league improve handicapped access.
  - **Dog Park:** Relocate the dog park so it activates a less visible part of the park, is away from the road, has clear boundaries (fences), and include signage so dog owners don't feel they own the whole SASP. Give it as much room as possible to support big dogs/exercise and also connect to the Bog to extend its year round use (perfect for retrievers, etc.). Enhance to support year round use and specialized dog skills training and events (K9 performance, field work training, agility trials, dog events, etc.). Separate entrance/exit and create surfaces near the entrance that keep it from getting muddy.
  - **Community Activities and Attractions:** Add picnic pavilions and “covered areas for moms,” play equipment, informal play areas that support community use and give other members of sports field users’ family fun stuff to do while they wait.
  - **Explore new uses** (BMX, Bike Park, occasional kiddie snow machine but maybe not Frisbee golf here since it needs a carefully defined area separate from other users).
  - **Radio Car Race Track:** Retain race track in permanent location at similar scale with fencing/security/boulders /bollards to keep out vehicles. Improve soil and drainage.
  - **Paintball:** This use is happy to have a home but at SASP inappropriate use and vandalism occur regularly. Can a permanent site be found in Anchorage with limited public access (like archery, this activity needs supervision do be done safely), ideally in the forest since it is fun for users?
  - **Odds and ends to consider:** Lighting in parking lot, improved trash dumpsters, signage, enhance drainage, create a pond, reduce mosquito issues (if possible), fencing for foul balls to protect north end of parking lot by baseball, use of artificial turf in a few high use zones (baseball, soccer, dog entry/training area, etc.).