



South Anchorage Sports Park (SASP)

Master Plan Update

Advisory Group Meeting #3



March 31, 2014 • Spenard Recreation Center

Attendees:

Bob Hoffman, Betty Hertz, Kent Best, Neil Koeniger, Nancy Beardsley, Richard Mystrom, Todd Glidewell, Steve Rafuse, Dwayne Adams, Sara Wilson Doyle, Kim Graham.

Overview Notes:

The final South Anchorage Sports Park Advisory Meeting opened with Dwayne Adams thanking participants for their attendance, and outlining the meeting's purpose:

- To present a "Preferred Alternative" Master Plan for feedback based on the last meeting's consensus items;
- To update the committee on items that were unclear at the last meeting; and
- To discuss the process for finalizing the updated master plan and beginning implementation.

Steve Rafuse then opened a PowerPoint agenda and welcomed participants. Next, Dwayne spoke to a series of presentation graphics highlighting "Consensus Items" from the last meeting for different locations within the park (Southwest, Southeast, Central, and North). Dwayne then described each element on a "Preferred Alternative" concept plan that visually represents a synthesis of the Advisory Group's consensus items.

Over the course of the presentation, Dwayne, Steve, Sara and Kim also discussed the results of some due diligence and findings on items had not been known during the last Advisory Committee meeting:

- USKH and MOA sat down with American Legion and sought clarification around the proposal to consolidate all the ball fields proximate to utilities. There was agreement that this could work, including in a configuration that allows 3 fields total (one dedicated to American Legion, one dedicated to Little League, and one available for either "Little League" or for "Pony League" youth).
- MOA obtained clarification that AWUU would be willing to waive requirements/tariffs so utility stubs on adjacent CIRI land can be extended directly across the property line into the park.
- MOA was unable to get buy in from Traffic on closing the existing access loop road on the south side of the park to create a wide pedestrian feature. Thus, the Preferred Alternative was adjusted to respond to Advisory Committee members' safety concerns in other ways:
 - The size of the parking area south of the road is halved (from original master plan), with a new casual use open space lawn incorporated taking advantage of the steep hill as a good edge to stop balls and toddlers (note: this also may support toddler soccer activities).
 - Along the road a sizable drop-off zone is provided along with traffic calming features to slow traffic and enhance safety.

- Parking is expanded in multiple locations around the park's perimeter. Keeping parking peripheral helps preserve the park and encourage inner park circulation.
- The Preferred Alternative graphic has two versions, one with and one without a water feature since the feasibility of this proposal is not yet known. MOA has initiated preliminary internal discussions over the feasibility of a "water feature" as an attractive visual element and off-leash water play/training feature. Based on stormwater MS4 outlet/drainageway flows the feature looks like it could serve multiple functions (recreational, flood control, water quality, etc.). Also, learning from Cuddy Mid-Town Park's water feature, which cost \$1 million dollars but saved the community from spending \$6 million in under road storm sewer upgrades, this feature could attract park funding from non-traditional sources (wetland credits, stormwater management MS4 permitting, area-wide developer contributions. Finally, on the issue of whether the water feature will increase mosquito issues, Kim offered some research that mosquito are less likely to breed on larger water bodies oriented so the wind "stirs" the top layer. Given SASP's wind, this may be less of an issue than expected (although the bog nearby, and wind-less days still mean the park will have mosquitos).
- MOA did some research and gathered information and images on Bike Parks. Slides were shared highlighting other communities' successful Bike Parks. Further research (beyond the scope of the plan) will be needed to specify exactly what the bike park will be, and how to address safety and liability.

Advisory Board Feedback and Preferred Alternative Refinements

Advisory Committee members were generally pleased with the preferred alternative, and confirmed that the concept represented their input. During discussion, a few final issues were raised to address:

- Snow Storage: How and where will snow be stored at the park in the future? Which parking lots will be plowed for winter use?
- Dog Issues: On the northeast corner of the park, add a fenced area that can serve as an off-leash area for people with smaller dogs that could be reserved and used for agility events and training. Also, within the larger dog area, create a "loop" path so owners do not have to walk back and forth on the same path (and to minimize dog confrontations).
- Security: There remains a strong concern that until the park is closed to vehicles during closed hours, such as through a gate, that any investment will be vulnerable.
- Construction Timing: There is concern that some activities have a short window of activity (ball fields, paintball, RC) and construction could be disruptive. Fall and winter construction options were raised, especially for utility lines that impact the road, and for creating the water feature.

Wrap-Up

A slide showing next steps was presented showing the SASP master plan update approval process starting at the Community Council (May), Parks and Recreation Commission (June), and Planning and Zoning Commission (July). There was also discussion that funding in hand is for utility and site preparation work, which may be able to start next summer (with efforts made to reduce impacts to users).

Dwayne then raised for discussion the idea of changing the park name from "South Anchorage Sports Park" which had its basis in a 1980s concept, to a name that has more local and community value. Advisory Group members liked the idea and agreed to think about it until the Bayshore/Klatt Community Council meeting in May, where they will raise the question for discussion.

The Advisory Board members were then thanked for their contributions to the process, and the meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.