

St. Edward Ballfield Improvements: Open House February 23, 2016

Written Questions and City Responses:

1. What environmental reviews will be done before approval/denial of the proposal regarding environmental impacts of lighting, runoff, noise, increased traffic on natural environment of St. Edward Park and park users?

- **Response:** A State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review will be completed before a lease is executed between the City and the State Park Commission and before permits are issued authorizing construction. SEPA provides a way to understand how a proposal may affect the environment (including lighting, surface water runoff, noise and traffic), identify possible environmental impacts and ways to reduce likely impacts or provide conditions that mitigate likely impacts.

2. What are the resource implications of the proposed development for St. Edward State Park? Extra staffing needs? Extra hours? Extra maintenance? Extra enforcements? Who will pay for this and how?

- **Response:** The City is working with State Park staff on conditions for a long term lease that would outline the responsibilities for maintaining, operating, scheduling and enforcement. Whether additional City or State Park resources will be needed is to be determined.

3. Will existing parking be expanded? Will existing parking spaces go away?

- **Response:** There are approximately 200 existing parking stalls available for park users who hold a Discover Pass. The City is not proposing to eliminate any existing parking stalls. The City and State Parks have not determined whether additional parking is required for the athletic field renovation. The City is exploring paving and restriping the existing parking area (approximately 20 parking stalls) immediately west of the athletic field and potentially adding four to seven more spaces.

4. How will the City follow up with making sure the field materials are non-toxic and do not harm children?

- **Response:** The proposed field materials are non-toxic and include synthetic turf with sand infill. Rubber infill is not proposed.

5. Will there be electronic scoreboards and a PA system?

- **Response:** An electronic scoreboard and PA system are not proposed.

6. Will restrooms be updated?

- **Response:** There is an existing public restroom just west of the athletic field. A new restroom is not proposed. The City and State Parks may partner on upgrading the existing restroom, if needed, to meet current ADA standards.

7. Will there be a concession stand?

- **Response:** A concession stand is not proposed.

8. After the large, old significant trees are removed for ballfields, how long until private enterprise can then develop?

- **Response:** The City is updating the tree survey to show tree locations. Once the tree survey plan is complete then the City can determine if any trees need to be removed. The athletic field renovation is not a private development, it is a public project, a partnership between the City and State Parks.

9. What demand has been demonstrated that cannot be met in existing fields?

- **Response:** Youth and adult organized athletic groups (baseball, soccer, cricket, lacrosse) who currently use or have used the fields indicate their membership is growing and there is demand for field use in general and in particular for local fields within the Kenmore community. General community support for active recreation including athletic fields has also been documented in several surveys.

10. Are you exercising exemptions, rezoning, or variances to destroy the natural and/or wetland areas to build this?

- **Response:** St. Edward State Park is zoned “Parks”. The athletic field is an existing use at the park and athletic fields are an allowed park use, so rezoning is not required. The City will be required to comply with City of Kenmore adopted critical area regulations, and City and other agency permit requirements. The City is updating the 2008 critical area report to include critical area delineations (such as wetlands and streams), assess critical area functions, potential impacts to critical areas from athletic field renovations and a conceptual mitigation plan. The critical area report will address compliance with variance or exemption criteria, if either is needed.

11. What means did you use to “populate” this meeting with children wearing sports garb despite the cold temperatures?

- **Response:** The meeting was open to all members of the community, and everyone was encouraged to attend and provide comment.

12. Your audience proves my attendance is futile so tell me how greatly the footprint is expanding?

- **Response:** All questions and comments at the meeting were encouraged. The footprint of the ballfield renovations is expected to be within the existing mowed area of the athletic field. Confirmation of the exact footprint can be determined once the updated survey drawing is complete.

13. What is the lease fee that would be paid to State Parks?

- **Response:** The lease conditions have not been determined, including whether a lease fee is required.

14. What is the service life for this surface

- **Response:** Depending on the level of use, the artificial turf layer may need to be replaced every 10 years.

15. How long until we can play ball?

- **Response:** There are many factors that could affect the timing for construction of the athletic fields including: Approval of the lease agreement between the City and State Parks; availability of funding, estimated at \$2 to \$3 million; and the permit process.

Answers to Comment Sheet Questions

What do you like?

- Better hydrology than grass – no fertilizers allows for water runoff. No rainouts! Kenmore needs fields. Turf is safest for kids
- Not in favor
- LED lighting with up lighting to see balls in the air at night, sand infill on field, covered seating and dugouts, bullpens
- The proposal looks great
- LED lighting, turf fields, covered bleachers
- Turf field – but no rubber, better fields for kids, lights provide even more field time, drainage system, LED lights, year round use
- I appreciate the thorough analysis of the ballfields and their impacts. I strongly support the renovation of the fields and moving forward as quickly as possible. Every season the demand grows and our field resources are not keeping up

What do you NOT like?

- The blatant effort to develop a state park for an unnecessary reason
- Field (at least one) isn't (?) sc__ in size to accommodate select baseballs kids at an older age level playing on 70-90' basepaths
- People who clearly don't understand how much pressure the league is under to acquire field space that is playable at this time of year
- Driving to Woodinville/Maltby every Saturday ☺
- The potential impacts to wetlands but I believe the restoration and mitigation will enhance their function

Anything you would like to see?

- Nurture the natural areas that are too rapidly disappearing
- Concession stand
- Parking plan, environmental impact – enhance the surrounding wetlands
- Artificial turf and LED lighting

Other Comments

- Our kids need playfields in our town, our youth sports are a vital piece of our community
- The development proposed at Saint Edward State Park is simply too much. A hotel, spa, restaurant, and ball fields with hundreds of cars coming to and from the park will forever degrade the state park. Careful research and consideration of the long term impact on the park land must be conducted/ given. How might we preserve, use and minimize impact?

Comments Spoken during the Open House:

- Need to balance recreation, conservation and preservation. Support the renovation project, it won't impact the enjoyment of the park, for example, noise impacts minimal as move away from the fields. Possibility to partner with the Environmental Learning Center to combine recreation and education.
- City moving too fast and rushing to change PAUE regulations. City needs to do due diligence on environmental issues and drainage at St Edwards. Support a grass infield and putting the ballfield on property the city currently owns, working with the school district or building ballfields over the lake.
- President of the Northlake Little League. 456 kids signed up for the 2016 season, growing registration over the last four years but fewer fields to play on. Support turf fields and lighting and providing fields in Kenmore.
- Coach for youth soccer and a member of Families for Active Parks in Kenmore. Supports the renovation and a balance of active and passive recreation. Value of recreation but also teams build integrity and honesty. Bastyr fields are heavily used every day except Sunday March to July. Growing need for fields.
- Supports the renovation and benefit of reduced traffic as shorter trips to a local field means also fewer trips impacting the system.
- Coach of a girls team. Supports the renovation at St Edwards and also additional fields at Lakepointe.

- Former assistant soccer coach. Concerned about environmental review as St. Edwards is unique, may also trigger NEPA. City should look for other ways to build a ballfield rather than at the state park.
- Coach. Supports the renovation. Now time to take action as the ballfield project has been talked about for a long time.
- Member of Families for Active Parks in Kenmore. The ballfield is about kids and leaving a legacy. St Eds is an amazing asset for everyone. The renovation is taking languishing fields, existing space, and making it better. Of course the city will look at traffic and environmental concerns.
- Played softball at Bastyr and soccer at St Eds. Support the renovation proposal.
- Former coach. Power of sport to create memories and lasting friendships. Concern about environmental impacts but has faith in the City. There is misinformation that wetlands will be destroyed after the project is finished. The project will have stormwater management and it will be a better wetland.
- Scheduler for the Little League. There are 45 teams and only 8 fields. Support the renovation.