

**Additional Park Commission Meeting
Mt Hood Feasibility Study
September 2, 2009**

Present: Mike Interbartolo, Joan Bell, Bob Christiansen, Bill Gardiner, Tom Friel, Cindy Brickley, Mike Farrell, Mike Ford, Phil Friel, John Mercer, John McLaughlin

I. SIGNING OF WARRANTS

Warrants were reviewed and signed.

II. MOUNT HOOD FEASIBILITY STUDY

Mike I. reviewed that the purpose of the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to give direction to Beals & Thomas, the consulting firm that has done a feasibility study at Mt. Hood, as to which plan or plans the Park Commission is in favor of. Mike I. feels the goal of the Feasibility Study was to increase the number of athletic fields in Melrose, improve the golfing experience at Mt Hood, and to provide a better, safer access to Mt Hood. Once Beals & Thomas is given some direction they can then finish their final report. Mike I. again described the different options that Beals & Thomas had brought forth. He told of the email that the Conservation Committee sent after the August 3rd meeting. It described Conservation's concerns. The email was responded to by Beals & Thomas. Mike I. feels these concerns will be dealt with in the next phase of the project and should not stop the process. Mike handed out a timeline of what he feels would need to be done for any of the plans to happen.

Mike stated that all of the options appear to fall into the 200' protected area that Melrose Conservation adheres to. This can not be determined until spring though. Other things can be done now though. Any funds we expend now should be reimbursable by the bond issued if the BOA passes the project. The Park Commission may choose to put out one RFQ for all services with the option of terminating or modifying a contract depending on approvals or lack thereof.

Mike I. went through the different options that Beals and Thomas presented to the Commission.

- Concept Plan A, Track and Athletic Field
- Concept Plan B- Alternate 1, Athletic Field and Hole 17 Extension
- Concept Plan C, Hole 17 Relocation
- Concept Plan D Athletic field and Hole 17 Relocation

After meeting with the golfers and then meeting with the public Mike I. feels that options B and D are the two worth pursuing.

John McLaughlin thinks that the B option with a change, Concept Plan B- Alternate 2, is something to look at. He thinks that access could be attained through the tot lot. This

would involve blasting rock, but, would not involve moving the 17th green. He would like to see cost estimates for Concept Plan B- Alternate 1 and Concept B- Alternate 2.

Tom Friel offered that a new green to the left of the existing green could be made. It could be put on the hill.

John McLaughlin asked how long the process would take to build a green. This would all have to be done before the athletic field could be started.

John Mercer feels to go through the tot lot would be best, unless the 17th hole is going to become a better hole.

The Friels do not feel the hole will be that much better.

Phil Friel said the best improvement to hole 17 would be to dry it out. He is not sure if that would be a Conservation Commission issue though. Discussion was had.

Bob Christiansen feels option B solves the field problem. He thinks that not touching the 17th hole is best. The problem is that parking is not maximized with this plan. Plan D though, would give easy access, a better field, more parking, no impact on the road to the tower, and no loss of golf revenue, because the new 17th could be built before taking down the old hole 17. This would take longer than Concept Plan B. Discussion was had about pace of play, and the walk from 16 to 17 would be very long.

Phil feels plan D does not give a good 17th hole.

John Mercer said that the plan the Friels came up with for hole # 11 seems like a great improvement to the golf course. That is one he would feel good about backing.

Mike Farrell thinks that the 17th hole in plan D is odd.

Phil commented that there are some options that may make the 17th better, but as it is now plan D is not good for hole #17.

Motion: By John Mercer to change the order of business to Public Participation

Second: John McLaughlin

Vote: Unanimous

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Bob ?, 16 Ravine Terrace, feels that Plan D is the only one that makes sense. After discussion he said he was a little confused on the plans.

John McDonald, 219 Laurel Street, has 4 concerns.

1. He feels the city is renegeing on the Big Dig fill promise, when the city said that traffic for any ball fields would go through Route 99.
2. The traffic issue on Laurel St is another concern.

3. John feels that passive recreation was not taken into consideration in any of these plans.
4. He is concerned with any general environmental issues related to putting in an artificial field and parking lot.

The traffic is a safety issue, property values could go down, and noise could be a problem.

He feels the area has given enough already to the city.

He is also worried about toxicity from runoff of the artificial turf.

He would like the Park Commission to revisit the issue and ask if this is a really necessary project.

He would like to know why the idea of putting fields on the big dig fill was rejected. It destroyed urban wildlife habitat and he does not want to see more destroyed.

Mike I. responded that access to the big dig area was studied and it is not easy to access. Also parking would be a problem. As well, the big dig soil is not good for putting a field on. The commission would like to see the big dig area/practice area expanded into a better driving range. Mike reiterated that there is a plan for a traffic study to be done. The city is in dire need of athletic fields. Safety of golfers and pedestrians, and, passive recreation are being addressed also. Trails and passive recreation has not been ignored and will be studied more as any of the plans progress. The big dig area is not big enough to be a hole and does not fit in with the rest of the course.

Joe Sullivan, 10 Birch Hill Road, Melrose Mirror reporter, has heard 5 different configurations. Where is the 11th hole/driving range configuration?

Mike answered that the 11th hole/driving range option is in addition to whichever option the commission wishes to pursue.

He is concerned that modifying the golf course to accommodate an athletic field will affect how people see the course. He does not want golf participation to go down because of this. Mt Hood generates a good amount of money now and this could go down. He feels that the golf course's "perception" needs to be saved. He feels very strongly about this.

He would like to mobilize the golfers to become a voice. This could be done possibly along with starting a Club championship or an Mt Hood Open. This would give a group a focus.

John McDonald, 219 Laurel Street, wonders if there isn't really a way to fit the kids on the fields we have. He feels that the number of walkers, etc, has not been has not been studied.

Motion: By John Mercer to close public participation

Second: John McLaughlin

Vote: Unanimous

Mike I. asked what option the commission would like to go forward with. He would like a decision so the consultant can wrap up his report. The report can then go to the Conservation Commission and they can give the PC what they need to find out when the area is studied. A topographical study should be done first. This should be done in fall when there are no leaves. This info will also go to the Conservation Commission. A traffic study would follow.

John McLaughlin would like to see Beals and Thomas's contract to be expanded to do the topographical study. Joan will check if this is possible and begin the RFQ for topographical services. Mike I. would like to see the topo study done now on the big dig area and after the leaves fall on the 17th hole area.

Motion: By John Mercer to select Concept Plan B with priority of looking into alternate 2, not impacting the 17th hole.

Second: Bob Christiansen

Vote: Unanimous

Joan will relay to Beals and Thomas the vote that the PC took.

John Mercer brought up that he would like to see the new windows, the kitchen renovations, and the AC be worked on this winter.

Joan has begun looking into the windows.

Phil Friel will bring his kitchen plans to the next meeting, which leads into making the patio into a 3 season room.

Mike I. said that the AC should go out to bid in 2 weeks.

Joan researched awnings to cover the patio and the walkway from the snack bar to the pro shop.

Joan stated that she needs to get 3 bids if any project is over \$5000. If a project is over \$25,000 it needs to be put out to public bid.

The PC would like the windows, the kitchen and the AC on next month's agenda.

Motion: By John McLaughlin to adjourn

Second: Bob Christiansen

Vote: Unanimous