

MINUTES
BROOKINGS PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
City of Brookings 898 Elk Drive, Brookings
December 2, 2004

Call to Order

Chair Boynton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Paul Cleary.

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Dave Gordon, April Gothard, Bill Boynton, Dori Blodgett, Tony Parrish, and Pat Sherman.

Commissioners Absent: Daryn Farmer.

Ex Officio Commissioner: Paul Cleary.

Staff Present: City Manager Leroy Blodgett, Parks Supervisor Dave Lentz, Councilor Frances Johns Kern, and Cathie Mahon, Secretary.

Media: Brian Bullock for *The Pilot*.

There were approximately 5 people in the audience.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Bankus Park:

Chair Boynton stated the purpose of the meeting was to decide the future of Bankus Park. At the October 28, 2004 meeting, a representative from ODOT, explained to the commission that when a study was done to define traffic problems at the intersection of Highway 101 and Fifth, Bankus Park became an issue. One of the regulations states when a Federal Transportation project is being prepared, an Environment Assessment is conducted and during the process the issue of Section 4(f) was raised. It states federal transportation projects must protect publicly owned parks, recreation areas, etc., and this applies to Bankus Park. Several traffic designs were presented at the meeting, outlining the impact on Bankus Park. He pointed out, before the Commission can make a decision regarding the park, public input was very important and necessary.

City Manager Blodgett stated the issue for the commission to decide is how important is the park and whether to allow any encroachment, and if so, how much. Bankus Park is in the parks system and a problem for ODOT because of Section 4(f), there cannot be any encroachment into the park unless the City allows it. ODOT cannot continue with their Environment Assessment report until a decision is rendered.

Handouts for Alternative 4 and 5 were distributed to the Commission, which outline the ODOT proposals at the Highway 101 and Fifth Street intersection. He used slides to illustrate the two configurations, and pointed out how each design would affect Bankus Park. Blodgett summarized the two designs. The original design for Alternative 4, a couplet, is a narrower design and takes out a piece of the park. Alternative 5, a non-couplet, is an 8-lane highway, and affects Taco Bell, A&W, the drive-thru for Washington Bank, and some of Fred Meyers parking.

Blodgett reported he could not find a lot of history on the donation of the land to the City. There is a restriction noted in the deed, stating the land can only be used for landscaping or streets. He introduced Mr. Don Horton, who built the fountain under Mr. Bankus' supervision. He stated he and his brother, worked with Elmer Bankus for three years before beginning construction. An architect from Portland made several trips to Brookings to confer with them about the design. Mr. Horton stated Elmer was a great guy and had such an interest in the fountain, he took them on many trips up the Chetco River to his property to pick out the right stones for the fountain. In 1973 the fountain was completed. Mr. Horton concluded he would not be in favor of having it changed from its current spot, plus it would be a huge undertaking.

Chair Boynton stated when ODOT was at the recent meeting, it seemed like there was a good chance they (ODOT) would pay to rebuild the fountain. But nothing can be done until a decision is made on how to satisfy Section 4(f).

City Manager Blodgett stated the city will have to fix the leak regardless of the decision. He addressed the Commission reiterating, the issue is not whether there is a couplet or not, it is will you allow encroachment into the park.

Discussion ensued. Suggestions from audience participants were considered such as moving the fountain and using the original stones. Don Nuss, a member of the Stakeholders Committee, encouraged the Commission to make a decision so that ODOT can finish their environment study and move forward. Sue Ross addressed the Commission expressing how much the fountain means to long-time residents, and her family uses it as a meeting place, especially during the Azalea Fest. Commissioner Parrish stated he wanted to make certain ODOT pays for an architect to draw up streetscape and landscaping plans.

City Manager Blodgett stated if the commission decides this park is a significant asset to this community, then ODOT has to come up with an alternative to avoid the park. The modified alternative 5 shows there are ways for them to do that, but it affects the businesses at the Chetco and Fifth Street intersection. Blodgett concluded if the city decided to declare Bankus Park no longer a park, this would satisfy the land needed for both Alternative 4 and 5.

Commissioner Sherman moved that we allow ODOT to move the fountain 20 feet in the same area. Discussion ensued about relocating the fountain and reclaiming part of Ray's parking lot. Commissioner Sherman then amended the motion:" that there is no significant impact to the Bankus Park as long as the fountain is reconstructed and designed in the same area at the expense of ODOT. The commission approved the motion by a vote of 5-1 (Commissioners Gordon, Gothard, Dori Blodgett, Sherman and Boynton voted in the affirmative; Commissioner Parrish voted no).

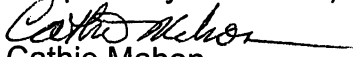
Commissioner Gothard questioned who would decide where the foundation would be. Blodgett stated he would include in his letter that the commission will approve the design, location, and construction of the fountain.

Blodgett stated staff would draft a letter to ODOT on the Commissions decision to permit encroachment to the park as long as there would be no significant impact to

the park and the fountain be rebuilt in the same area with the same design as it currently is. When they do their 4(f) report, they have to tell the federal government that they are impacting Bankus Park but the city has said there will not be a significant impact as long as certain things happen such as rebuilding the foundation.

With no further business before the Commission, the Chair moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathie Mahon

Recording Secretary

Approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission

DECEMBER 16, 2004 date