

MINUTES
GIG HARBOR PARKS COMMISSION
Wednesday, November 3, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting (via Zoom webinar)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Parks Commission Members: Present – Chair Ben Coronado, Vice Chair Mary Barber, Roger Henderson, Louise Tieman (joined 5:33pm), Will Appleton (joined at 5:44pm), Anastasia Wright. Absent – Doug Terrien (unexcused)

City Council Liaison: Spencer Abersold

Staff: Public Works Director Jeff Langhelm, Public Works Assistant Terri Garrison

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of October 6, 2021 Parks Commission Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Move to approve the October 6, 2021 Parks Commission Minutes

Barber / Henderson - Motion passed unanimously

PUBLIC COMMENT

Georgina Armstrong, 4340 Borgen Blvd, GH – Provided comments regarding Shaw Park becoming a community garden and environmental center, prioritizing for master planning and inclusion in the Parks Plan Update, adding a forest management plan and GIS to track combustible vegetation, climate adaptation plan and drought resistant plans.

Barb Walton, 4340 Borgen Blvd, GH – Provided comments regarding the addition of renovation to Shaw Park to the PROS Plan update and asked that the park become an active park and that an environmental center and community garden be added.

Sarah Lindhartsen, 3506 107th St Ct NW, GH – Provided comments regarding the addition of a community garden at Shaw Park to the PROS Plan update and working with the community to develop this plan.

Jerry Walton, 4340 Borgen Blvd, GH – Provided comments that 1) Shaw Park be added to the PROS Plan and Update and 2022 work plan due to the deplorable condition of the park and, 2) Shaw park offer a community garden, and 3) that an environmental center be included, and the use of the park be changed from passive to active.

Additional written comments were received prior to the meeting and are attached to the minutes as a part of the public record.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Pros Plan Update – Chair Ben Coronado provided the PROS Plan Subcommittee

report. The Stakeholder group meetings have been completed and we received good input. The virtual Open House will be live November 3-12 to provide an additional opportunity for public input.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Clean Dog Park Proposal for Shaw Park** – Pam Peterson, Vicki Diamond and Scott Junge, representing the Rotary Club of Gig Harbor, presented their proposal for an Urban Dog Park to be implemented at the property just to the west of Shaw Park, currently owned by the developers of the Village of Harbor Hill, which could potentially be donated to the City in the future.
2. **Arts Commission Collaboration** – Mary Barber commented on the potential for more collaboration with the Arts Commission and asked the Parks Commission to support the inclusion of an arts and culture component in the comprehensive plan. Commissioner Wright offered to be the liaison to the Arts Commission with Lynn Stevenson being the Arts Commission representative. Commissioner Wright will provide an update to the Parks Commission quarterly or when new information becomes available.

MOTION: Move that the Parks Commission express its support for the inclusion of an arts and culture component in the City of Gig Harbor's comprehensive plan and ask staff to convey that support to them through a copy of this motion. The Parks Commission encourages the growth of all aspects of art and culture in the city and pledges to work together with the Arts Commission to increase the presence of art in our parks based on a broad sense of the definition of art and culture.

Barber / Henderson - Motion passed unanimously

PARKS UPDATE REPORT – Public Works Director Langhelm provided general park update information and answered questions, noting a few recent developments not included in the published update.

- Anicich Human-Powered Craft Storage – Rental terms are being developed to coincide with the Community Paddler's Dock opening in the spring.
- Eddon Boat Railway Carriages – This project is now complete.
- Parks Manager position – A candidate has been identified to fill the position and the City is proceeding with the background process for potential hiring.
- Property Donation – A property on 96th Street, next to Cushman Trail, is being acquired through a donation to the City.
- Timing for 2022 Parks Commission Work Plan – Joint meeting with City Council to be scheduled in Jan/Feb.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

ADJOURN

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 7:20 p.m.

Barber / Coronado - Motion passed unanimously

November 1, 2021

City of Gig Harbor Parks Commission
3510 Grandview Street
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

Dear Commissioners,

It has come to our attention that you will soon be drafting an update to the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan as well as a Works Plan for 2022.

We respectfully request that you include a renovation, and possible change of use, for Shaw Park in both plans, given its very poor condition. Among the issues are the need for Shaw Park to be effectively graded and have adequate drainage. The trees and shrubs should be replanted given that they have been dying due to being incorrectly planted. In the winter, the south end of the park becomes a bog. The same occurs in the summer when the irrigation is operating.

We also request that the City of Gig Harbor consider redesigning the use of Shaw Park from "Passive" to "Active" and that a community garden and environmental center be constructed. The PROS Plan Survey results show that 75% of participants support the idea of adding another community garden (the other being at Wilkinson Farm); therefore, the idea is very popular with Gig Harbor residents.

Currently, this park is the only City park that is within walking distance for the Harbor Hill community which has accounted for much of Gig Harbor's 68.9% population growth from 2010 to 2021. It is our opinion that a park should provide adequate space for a proposed use before all the available land for development is used up, not after.

Such an opportunity fits well with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Adopted August 2015 and revised in November 2018, it calls for addressing the need for both protection and conservation of our natural environment and wildlife habitats, the maintenance and restoration of our ecosystems, and the need to clean up polluted waterways and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Comprehensive Plan also calls for ensuring that "a healthy environment remains available for future generations in Gig Harbor." To these points, a new community garden will focus on organic gardening, and will be constructed using sustainable materials. The environmental center will educate children about the need to conserve and protect our natural resources. The design of the garden will include elements that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by not using gasoline-powered mowers and blowers, and will filter stormwater run-off through the construction of a rain garden on the south side of the park so that pollutants are removed before the water enters the Puget Sound.

We sincerely hope that you will consider such a use of Shaw Park. The time for doing so is now given that the condition of the park warrants a complete makeover, and it comes at a time when additional land is about to be annexed to the park.

Respectfully submitted,

Residents of Harbor Hill

Natalie Swezey

Joy Wilcox

James Richard

Pamela Rowland

Karen J. Coloe

Noshiko Putzier

Helena Chapman

Bruce Mullen

Shaune Mulloy

Paul Ketchum

Dianne Orr

Don Hansen

Norika M. Stewart

Lee Beckwith

Norma Carr

Glorrie Davis

Kevin R. Smith

Helen M. Woolley

Thomas Tamparo

M. Smith

Jane Richard

Pamela Rowland

Susan Hoffman

Don W. Hoffman

Gerald S. Schneider

Lizda Helmer

D. Ransom

De Sparks

Barbara Leitchman

R. Gausem

Nelva Shandera

Mary Harlosky

Marty Beert

David Armstrong

Joanne Murphy

Hugh Murphy

Lain Malloy

Duff Donnelly

Kurt Pahl

Kae Paterson

Karen M. Coles

Carol W. Thompson

Jim M. Pitt

Georgina Armstrong

Jamara Davidson

Cindy Thayer

Deen Red

Barbara Walker

Kathleen Stark

Mary Anne Folson

Max W. Folson

Harry B. Lee

Wendy S. Hoff

Patricia Hunt

Martha L. Sazquez

Synda J. Hrouse

Scalabrino

Susan Inui

Deen J. Grisham

Kathleen Mauro

Wanda A. Donnelly

Barbara Pine

~~Barbara Pine~~

Ronald B. Coles

Muriel J. Watts

Jean S. Moffatt

Romney

Xee Magill

Nancy Polen

etc

Scott Maiden

Barbara V. Lee

Barbara Casey

Robert Smith

Beverly J. Chaskey

Margaret Miller

Altaguez

Amelina Lippman

John R. Hrouse

Ray Scalabrino

Susan Inui

Chris

Dan Hille

Erany Gm Enadonald

Gladys Maidens

Sandra L. Hoppes

Ronald E. Hoppes

Elizabeth O. Holt

Dorsey W. Holt

Carolyn Dahlback

Peter Bakkeby

Glenn Bunn

Rick Machin

Meredith Machin

Gust Heathman

x M. Heath

John T. Curtis

Anna E. Alness

Robert C. Alness

Elizabeth O. Holt

Dorsey W. Holt

Address for all the above signatures is:

4340 Borgen Blvd.

Gig Harbor, WA 98332

November 1, 2021

City of Gig Harbor Parks Commission
3510 Grandview Street
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

Dear Commissioners,

I would like to make the following requests that:

- 1) Shaw Park be added to both the PROS Plan update and the Works Plan for 2022 due to its deplorable condition which was caused by grading, draining and planting errors when the park was constructed.
- 2) Shaw Park offer a community garden in place of its current use. This action is warranted given the results of the PROS Plan Survey where 75% of participants indicated their support of the City adding another community garden to its parks system.
- 3) An environmental center be included. This would create an opportunity to present educational classes on ecosystem protection and organic gardening methods.

By adding a community garden and environmental center at Shaw Park, the City will be acknowledging its stated intention in the PROS Plan that it must provide the level of service acreage based on population growth. According to the U.S. Census, Gig Harbor's population grew by 68.9% from 2010 to 2020, and much of that growth occurred in Harbor Hill. Shaw Park is the only City park that is within walking distance from the area's residential developments and Swift Water School. The City, therefore, should change Shaw Park from "Passive" to "Active" use and provide activities that all residents - young and old - can find physically and educationally beneficial.

Respectfully yours,

Karen M. Coles

Karen M. Coles

Ronald G. Coles

Ronald G. Coles

4340 Borgen Blvd.

November 1, 2021

City of Gig Harbor Parks Commission
3510 Grandview Street
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

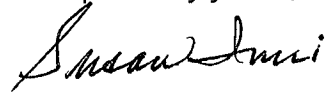
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Respectfully yours,



SUSAN Inui

Heron's Key

4340 Borgen Blvd.

Gig Harbor, WA

98330

November 1, 2021

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3510 Grandview Street
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

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Respectfully yours,

Margaret Miller
Heron's Key Resident

November 2, 2021

City of Gig Harbor Parks Commission
3510 Grandview Street
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

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Sincerely,

Dorothea Lintz,
Harbor Hill Resident
4340 Borgen Blvd, Apt 1618
Gig Harbor, WA 98332

November 1, 2021

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3510 Grandview Street
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

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Respectfully yours,



Don Ransom
Heron's Key
4340 Borgen Apt. 209
Gig Harbor, WA
98332

John T. Curtis
4340 Borgen Blvd., Apt 1509
Gig Harbor, WA 98332

November 3, 2021

City of Gig Harbor Parks Commission
3510 Grandview Street
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

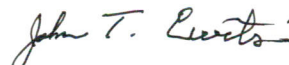
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John T. Curtis

November 2, 2021

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3510 Grandview Street
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

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Respectfully yours,

Joyce Meyer
Harbor Hill resident

From: [Louise Anderson](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Cc: [Lenny Anderson](#); [Louise Anderson](#)
Subject: Input to Parks Commission Meeting of 11/3/21
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 2:45:30 PM

Dear Commissioners,

As residents of the Harbor Hill area and adjacent Heron's Key retirement community, we walk in Shaw Park almost daily. We have a view of Shaw Park from our apartment.

We would like to request that:

- Shaw Park be added to both the PROS Plan update and the Works Plan for 2022 due to its deplorable condition which was caused by grading, drainage, and planting errors when the park was constructed.
- Shaw Park offer a community garden in place of its current use. This action is warranted given the results of the PROS Plan Survey where 75% of participants indicated their support of the City adding another community garden to its parks system.
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According to the U.S. Census, Gig Harbor's population grew by 68.9% from 2010 to 2020, and much of that growth occurred in Harbor Hill. Shaw Park is the only City Park that is within walking distance from the area's residential developments and Swift Water School. The City, therefore, should change Shaw Park from "Passive" to "Active" use and provide activities that all residents - young and old - can find physically and educationally beneficial.

We look forward to positive action by the City.

Sincerely,

Lenny and Louise Anderson
4340 Borgen Blvd #1237
Gig Harbor, WA

From: [Gee Heckscher](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: 11/3/21 PROS meeting
Date: Monday, November 1, 2021 9:12:51 PM

FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Please include Shaw Park in your PROS discussions. The trees along the walk are almost dead from root rot in the hard pan and rain and excess irrigation just run off the grass areas planted over hard glacial till. Also please consider a use plan such as a community garden.

Gee Heckscher
4340 Borgen Blvd. Apt. 1539
Gig Harbor, WA 98332
415-760-4324
gheckscher@gmail.com

From: kjcohoe7775@gmail.com
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: Dog Park
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 1:37:58 PM

It has come to our attention that a dog park is going to be proposed for Shaw Park. Since we live about 150 yards from where the proposed dog park will be (beyond the current grass area and near the “village”) I want to go on record against the dog park. The noise and odor of dog feces is not appropriate for either a nice neighborhood, or a grocery store and other businesses being identified for the “village”. NIMBY for sure.

I have another engagement and won't be able to speak to this concept tonight, but I hope you will take our disapproval of the dog park concept seriously.

Karen Cohoe
4340 Borgen Blvd
Gig Harbor

Sent from App for Gmail

From: [Florence Helliesen](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: Shaw Park Comments
Date: Monday, November 1, 2021 7:40:37 PM

I live at Heron's Key and would like to connect with the group that is highly supportive of having a dog park in Shaw Park. How do I connect with those people? Please feel free to forward this to that group.

Thank you!

Florence Helliesen
fhelliesen@msn.com

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [David Armstrong](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: Shaw Park community garden and environmental learning center
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 1:07:43 PM

TO: Gig Harbor Parks Commission

FROM: David Armstrong, 4340 Borgen Blvd., Gig Harbor

I am a resident of North Gig Harbor and I live right next door to Shaw Park. I strongly support a community garden and environmental education center, complete with rain gardens, as the sole focus of the park. Shaw Park gives Gig Harbor an ideal opportunity to create a public park that is creative, innovative, bold, and utterly unique.

Dog parks, pickleball courts and the like are all very well, but they mustn't be jammed into a small park like Shaw. Rather, they can be folded into the expansive sports complex slated for the Harborview neighborhood. This fast-urbanizing area is big enough to offer many amenities to the public, but Shaw Park by itself is not.

A reimagined Shaw Park that offers hands-on, practical experience in sustainable gardening has cross-generational appeal, and will give local folks an opportunity to grow bountiful, healthful food without degrading our soil, water and air.

An environmental learning center will benefit residents ranging from the children at the gorgeous new Swift Water Elementary School to the area's seniors - and everyone in-between. It will be a singular addition to the City parks system, and showcase leadership by example.

Rain gardens will help drain and filter water from the park, channeling clean water to precious young salmon downstream in Donkey Creek.

This is the moment to transform Shaw Park. With the drumbeat of news coming from the global climate summit in Scotland, there is no time to lose. Gig Harbor is a small city and Shaw Park is a small park, but both have a positive role to play in a very big story. Let's play it.

Sincerely,

David Armstrong
November 3, 2021

From: [Barb Carr](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: Shaw Park Community Garden support
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 2:21:06 PM

Dear Terri,

I want to voice my support for the proposed community garden at Shaw Park. I am working with Georgina and her group to help plan and organize the garden. They will include an educational component for elementary aged children, as well as organic gardening classes for all ages. The model will be similar to the Wilkinson Farm Park Community Garden, and will include a proposed greenhouse.

The community of Gig Harbor needs more garden spaces.

The Wilkinson Farm Park Garden currently has a five person waiting list for the 2021-2022 season. This is a low number for us right now, and the list will grow as spring approaches, historically to ten or more. Every year we are forced to turn prospective gardeners away because our space is limited to 45 plots. The garden has an almost twenty year track record of success, with many gardeners who have been with us eight years or more. Additional community gardens in our community will provide needed space for individuals and families who desire access to organic produce and outdoor activities. Many gardeners are new to the area, and the garden is a wonderful way to integrate into a new community.

Gig Harbor City Parks approval of a new community garden will add an important additional component to our Gig Harbor culture. We will be able to meet the needs of more of our residents, new and old. It is an important way to welcome people to Gig Harbor, and also to include those already living here.

Please support this community garden.

Sincerely,
Barbara Carr
Manager, Wilkinson Farm Park Community Garden

From: [Pfaller, Mike](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: Shaw Park development
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 10:39:06 AM

I am a resident of Herons key and am in full support of a dog park being added to Shaw park.
Mike Pfaller

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Barbara Lee](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Cc: georginaarmstrong@sbcglobal.net; [Jerry Walton](#)
Subject: Shaw Park Public Comment
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 12:52:35 PM

My husband and I lived at Seattle's Mirabella Retirement Community for six years before moving to Heron's Key in Gig Harbor. During that time the Denny Way Substation was under construction. An off leash dog park was being considered between Mirabella and the substation.

Many nay sayers wrote in opposition to the proposed dog park, with comments such as "It will be too noisy" or "It will smell."

Fortunately the dog park was approved, and it is a huge success in many ways.

The Mirabella apartments most desired now are overlooking the dog park. The senior Residents love watching the fun the dogs and owners have at the park. Socialization for both dogs and humans. Residents have even written articles about how much they enjoy watching dogs play at the park.

One day I sat on a bench by the park with a mother and daughter who both were wearing masks - preCovid. They had walked from Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center to watch the dogs. An encouraging and cheerful respite between cancer treatments.

The park was neither noisy or smelly.

Dogs are a meaningful part of many Residents at Herons Key, and I am sure they would appreciate having an off leash dog park so close. Gig Harbor is often referred to as a dog friendly town. Let's prove that by having an off leash dog section of Shaw Park.

Thank you for your consideration.

Barbara Lee
Heron's Key #1304
425-417-6208



Denny Substation Dog Park

🏆 #3 of 3 Seattle Dog Parks

 Edit

📍 Seattle, WA 98109

🌱 This business is eligible for a free website

Have you used Denny Substation Dog Park?

Share your story.

★ Add Recommendation

💡 Add Cautionary Tale

Recommended By



★ Brooklyn Benjestorf

10 months ago

❤️ 3

This dog park is so cute! Nestled right into SLU near REI, this astroturf dog park is great for downtown dwellers who want to socialize their dogs. Everyone we've met there is so friendly and the park is well maintained.

Reviews

🌐 Google ★★★★★ (59 reviews)

🍴 Yelp ★★★★★ (3 reviews)

12:17 PM Tue Nov 2

56%

Search Maps

Siri Suggestions



Denny Substation Dog Park

Recently viewed

Favorites

See All



Home
Add



Work
Add



9817 55t...
19 mi



Add



3D

John St

Minor Ave N

Denny Substation
Dog Park

W Denny Way

W Denny Way

50°

AQI 54

From: whysimba@aol.com
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: Shaw Park/Heron's Key
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 12:15:51 PM

I am a resident of Heron's Key which is adjacent to Shaw Park.

I am in favor of a Community Garden (the sooner the better) .

I am absolutely not in favor of a Dog Park!!!!!!

I have had many dogs in the past, AKA registered, some were shown. I would never take my dogs to a dog park!!!

There are too many issues between dogs and owners!!

The City of Gig Harbor does not need any more issues!!

Sincerely

Mary Lenard

From: [Marilyn Brenner](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: Shaw Park
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 11:58:07 AM

As a resident of the Harbor Hill community (Heron's Key, 4340 Borgen Blvd. Apt. 1250, Gig Harbor, WA 98332) who resides next to and with a view of Shaw Park, I would like to see Shaw Park used as a Community Garden and an Environmental Center which is adjacent to the ponds and woods, usages of which are environmental and educational.

I do not support Shaw Park being used as a dog park.

Marilyn Brenner
253-208-2285
msbrenner@hotmail.com

From: [Linda Helmer](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: Shaw Park
Date: Monday, November 1, 2021 6:27:13 PM

PLEASE do not make Shaw park into a dog park. It needs landscaping, benches, a few picnic tables and shade areas. Make it a park for neighborhood people!
From a Harbor Hill Resident

From: [Nancy Polen](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: shaw park
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 9:36:56 AM

The improvements to Shaw Park as presented by Georgine Anderson are to my liking, not a dog park.

Nancy Polen
Herons Key resident

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [Beverly Ringenberg](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: Shaw Park
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 7:25:59 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

We understand that the majority of residents of Heron's Key are not in favor of a dog park, HOWEVER, as resident's of Heron's Key, we want the council to understand that there are some residents who do support this idea. Obviously, our hope would be that it would be attractively landscaped and well maintained. A community garden is not of interest to us, most importantly we'd like to see the common area benefit the community without undue ongoing expenses.

We are in favor of a dog park,
Mike Pfaller
and
Bev Ringenberg

--

[Bev Ringenberg](#)
352-543-0362 (CK)
541-517-0402 (cell)

From: [Cindy Thayer](#)
To: [Terri Garrison](#)
Subject: Shaw Park
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 10:18:24 AM

As a resident of Herons Key, I strongly object to a dog park at Shaw Park. I would like a community park with picnic tables, etc, and no community garden.

Thank you, Cindy Thayer

Sent from my iPad

FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

I live at Heron's Key and I do not want the area next door to be essentially an extension of the elementary school.. We need a fence all along the park side and along the Sanctuary road.

I am very concerned about the recommendation of replanting the border between the park and Heron's Key. The trees and shrubs currently there are just beginning to provide us with a little privacy; now you imply that that the replanted things will provide shade and privacy to the west side (our side) of the building. Given the time it would take for them to grow to that size would take a long time, that might not happen until some of us die. Why not leave the border trees and shrubs that are currently there and plant things that will grow taller in the park area on the HK side of the sidewalk? The soil there could be improved. What about moving some of the large cedar trees that are too close to our Heron's Key building and having them planted on the park border?

I do not know what the budget is for the various parks and it seems to me like the propositions listed in Georgina Armstrong's report would be very expensive. Also, how will the work on the park extension and redoing coordinate with all the work that will be done for building the Village? Where will construction vehicles, employees' cars, materials, etc. be kept during construction? I envision lots of noise during the renovation and major problems with vehicles.

I think determination of what will go on the non-park property should be finalized before the park decisions are made. There will be MANY people living in the Harbor Hill Village area and I do not feel that turning the park into a spot for organic gardening is appropriate. It is NOT school property and I feel it is inappropriate to add the park area as an extension of the elementary school program. The school has its own grounds and places for children to play. Who is going to provide for the upkeep, especially when school is not in session. It seems like the Village should be built and that the park should be improved after that.

It is my understanding that the undeveloped property next to Shaw Park will be required to include a grocery store of some type and that will require a parking lot. I have also heard that a six-story apartment building will be built on some of the property. I have been very anti the Sanctuary project as I believe it is going to cause a major influx of people very close to our property. Yes, it should beautify the property, but will negatively impact the tranquility that we have enjoyed to this point. We already have people ignoring the private property signs and cutting across our property. That will only get worse if you encourage the essential invasion of our neighborhood. Other parts of the Neighborhood have places (pocket parks) where children can congregate and play. The park area should be beautified, but not invaded. Who will take care of their gardens during the summer

I feel what Georgina Armstrong is suggesting only deals with a small portion of the population. Not everyone in the neighborhood has children and Georgina's recommendation does nothing for the rest of us. It will encourage outsiders to invade our property.

I could envision a small dog park that would have a section for small dogs and adjoining one for big dogs. There is nothing like that near here and people seem to let their dogs run around off-leash. I could envision bocce ball courts or something similar. We can play badminton and croquet there. Will there be restrooms? Dispenser for dog poop? Where will the parking be located and how much will be needed to accommodate the park and the residents and stores in the Harbor Hill Village area?

I would like to have a copy of the current draft of the plan for a community garden and environmental center, as well an information on the results of the PROS survey. I would like to have access to the Stakeholders' meeting for the 65 and older group.

Florence Helliesen
Herons Key

COMMUNITY GARDEN & ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER in SHAW PARK

Proposed Use

The plan to increase the size of Shaw Park will now provide an opportunity to offer a community-building environment that centers on organic gardening and environmental awareness that would include water resource and wildlife protection and conservation. The design would focus on climate-resiliency (reflecting the need to adapt to future warming conditions), use environmentally-sustainable materials, and incorporate low-maintenance features that will reduce operating costs.

The Center would use clean water strategies for filtering pollutants from stormwater runoff and include a variety of water-conserving methods which support the City's aims for promoting public awareness in these areas. Water conserving features like rain barrels, drought-tolerant plants, synthetic turf, and low-flow irrigation would be included in the design. The role aquifers, wells and storage tanks play in our water systems, and information on the City's three water utility departments (water, wastewater, and stormwater) would also be included as an educational component, and a rain garden would be featured on the south side of the park in order to effectively filter pollutants from stormwater runoff. Clean energy practices would also be incorporated into the plan, allowing for a reduction or elimination in the use of fossil fuel-driven lawn and garden equipment, thereby lowering future costs for the City while also contributing to the mitigation of climate change impacts.

The garden would be divided into four sections: an organic growing area with both in-ground and raised planters for members of the community who do not have room to grow vegetables at home, and for educational purposes in teaching children about organic gardening; a greenhouse for year-round gardening and plant propagation; a pollinator garden for attracting our declining pollinator populations; and an outdoor education area for presentations on gardening and environmental awareness, including the protection and preservation of wildlife habitats and Gig Harbor's natural resources.

The Community Garden and Environmental Center in Shaw Park would become a model in the years to come for its progressive design, and its focus on the conservation and preservation of our natural resources and wildlife habitats. Volunteers, including seniors, would be encouraged to play a variety of roles in the design and upkeep of the garden, and lead educational presentations that would enhance both the environmental-awareness aims of the Gig Harbor's Comprehensive Plan, and the community-building nature of the project.

Background

Shaw Park has fallen into a deplorable state because it was never effectively graded or adequately drained, and the plants and trees were not planted in amended soil. The result was that the glacial till impeded the successful growth of the plants, especially the

trees which have been dying. The lack of effective drainage has meant that seasonal rainfall and over-irrigation in the summer months have created flooding which has blocked access to the path and saturated the lawn, causing the southern area to frequently become unnavigable. In doubling its size, there is now an opportunity to correct the errors of the past and create a new and more successful park for the enjoyment of the community.

In order to maximize the project, the community garden and environmental center will need all of the newly annexed land in addition to the current space allotted to Shaw Park. If possible, additional land should be added which will make the newly envisioned project more complete. There will also need to be an area for off-site parking which currently doesn't exist.

The request to offer a community garden at Shaw Park is justified because there is much interest in Harbor Hill for a community garden and environmental center. Also, 75% of participants in the PROS Plan survey indicated their support for an additional community garden in Gig Harbor. Since the idea behind the survey was to get the opinion of the public in order to know what would be a popular park use for recreational activities, their overwhelming support for a community garden should be heard, and Shaw Park is the ideal location for such a facility.

Gig Harbor experienced 68.9% population growth rate from 2010 to 2020 according to the U.S. Census. Currently, there is only one City park for this burgeoning area that is within walking distance from the residential developments in Harbor Hill - Shaw Park. By having a community garden and environmental center nearby, the residents of Harbor Hill will have an "Active" park use that will offer school children, families, and seniors, an opportunity to engage in outdoor activities that will provide environmental awareness, stress release, and physical fitness. Anyone can enjoy gardening and learning more about our natural resources, not just a select few.

Design

The new park design would include components that highlight and support the interactive activities and aims of the project, and also address the plant health and drainage issues that have previously been encountered.

Strategies for consideration:

Develop a leadership committee based on the groups who will be responsible for the development and management of the garden.

Regrade the entire park to redress the drainage issues of the past. The park should be graded so that all water runoff is managed successfully during the heaviest storms.

Develop an extensive rain garden on the south side of the park so that the land is graded and sloped to that area. Currently, there has been extensive flooding from both rain and irrigation water in Shaw Park, and the rain garden would not only ensure that

there is no flooding, but that stormwater runoff water is filtered effectively before running into the wetlands, and the Puget Sound beyond.

Use permeable materials for all hardscape areas, including pathways and any open-space gathering areas included in the design. These surfaces will then enable water to sink into the soil beneath the hardscape, and then run down the sloping terrain to be filtered in the rain garden.

Design a community garden that offers gardening opportunities for all ages and abilities. This would be reflected in both in-ground and above-ground garden plots that are of different heights that will appeal to people of varying capabilities and abilities. The in-ground plots are important to include because of their ability to maximize the conservation of water.

A compost system would be added to more fully support the growing potential in the garden.

Erect a greenhouse for the option of year-round gardening and plant propagation. The use of this structure will also extend the educational component of the project.

Plant a pollinator garden to attract bumblebees and honeybees, as well as butterflies.

Creating a lawn area within the park may not be necessary with this plan, but should one be desired, then it would fit the sustainable concept if it were to be made of synthetic material. Why synthetic turf as opposed to natural grass? The former is both a cost-effective approach over the long term as there is no need for mowing, edging or irrigation maintenance, and it saves on water. It also does not require air- and stormwater-polluting fertilizer or weed control products. To prevent standing water, the holes in the backing allow liquids to permeate through the material and drain to the soil underneath. This means that rain, overspray from nearby irrigation systems, dog urine, and other liquids can flow through the backing and be carried away via the channels below to the rain garden. There have been major advances in the development of synthetic turf, including the removal of lead found in earlier emanations. Less shiny and more authentic-looking materials are now an option, with some incorporating the natural elements found in lawns, like weeds and variations of blade width. (Note: the garden components and outdoor education area may not require any lawn area, just a place to hear presentations, and/or have a picnic.)

Install benches that will enable outdoor education classes to be taught to a class of children and/or adults, or picnic tables with benches would be another option. Provide pest-resistant fruit trees for shade.

Install an electronic gate at the entrance to the service road that runs along the perimeter of the park and leads to the rear of Heron's Key and the soon-to-be established Harbor Hill Environmental Sanctuary. The service road provides critical access for fire safety and life-saving personnel, and those who are authorized to provide maintenance

to the pond and wetland areas. Signage should be clear as to who is and is not permitted to enter. Using an electronic rather than manual style of gate will reduce the response times of life-saving personnel and emergency vehicles.

Replant the upper canopy trees that are dying on the east side of the park that will grow from 150 to 200 feet, and which will eventually offer shade to the west side of Heron's Key. These trees will form a denser, and safer, forest-like grouping of trees when growing alongside those that Heron's Key has already planted on the boundary with the park. As our summers become hotter, shade will become highly valued as a means for cooling residential buildings.

Break down the hardpan where trees are to be planted and use soil amendments accordingly.

Use mulch and/or compost to reduce evaporation of moisture from the soil.

Use an Irrigation system for the park and garden that is based upon the water needs of the plants in each area. Hydro zones could be included that would provide higher amounts of water for plants/trees that need to be watered more often, especially in the first two years of being planted, and a drip system should be implemented in other areas, including the community garden and greenhouse. Drought-tolerant plants should be considered as much as possible. Rain barrels could also be included for hand- and hose-watering needs.

Use low-carbon emissions equipment for maintaining the park and the garden. Rakes, hoes and, where necessary, hand-weeding should be encouraged.

Position dog stations for those who are walking their dogs, which should be positioned at each entrance to the park for the convenience of those who need either a dog bag or a place to deposit their bag.

Assign an adequate number of parking spaces which are designated for use by community garden visitors, school groups and volunteers. Such availability will be important, especially for those who are carrying garden equipment and plants.

Engage groups early on in the process of planning and building the garden. Partners should be identified in the community and in the non-profit sector who are well-suited to take on well-defined tasks based upon their expertise.

Encourage a shared process of planning, planting, tending, and harvesting in order to effectively provide a continuous management in all phases, and creating a rotation of gardening tasks to reflect seasonal requirements.

Erect signage about the garden and the education center which should include a bulletin board of the progress that is being made, along with announcements about upcoming events.

Harvest of produce that exceeds the amount that contributors can use will be donated to the local Food Bank. Additional plots of land will be reserved for Food Bank produce donations.

Seasonal activities for residents of all ages will be offered, and projects will be made available for elementary and high school students, and Eagle scouts.

Conclusion

The Community Garden and Environmental Center in Shaw Park would provide an opportunity for a collaborative relationship between the City and the community of Harbor Hill, including the students of Swift Water Elementary School, and seniors who live at Heron's Key. By promoting environmentally sustainable practices, the Center will offer an ideal place to promote a love and appreciation for organic gardening, and foster an awareness and understanding of why we need to conserve and protect our natural resources and wildlife habitats.