



proud past, promising future

# Hazel Dell Sports Fields Public Comment Summary

Comment Period: July 30-August 20, 2009

This is a summary of the verbal comments received at the public meeting held on July 30, 2009, and the written comments received through the project Web page and through e-mails to county staff after the public meeting. This summary reflects a range of opinions, and is not intended to present a word-for-word transcript of all the comments received.

## **Proposed development and uses:**

- Prefer sports fields be built here instead of apartments, subdivisions or a strip mall.
- Prefer a smaller footprint/scope (less fields, less parking, no access road).
- Little League teaches children important life lessons and should be supported.
- Need to provide features that appeal to and can be used by more people (i.e. tennis courts, basketball courts, picnicking areas, trails, gathering places, etc.).
- There are not enough sports fields available in Clark County to meet the needs of families. These fields will allow more kids to play ball.
- Ball fields will benefit the entire community.
- Include Hazel Dell Metro Babe Ruth to the list of user groups.
- Sports fields can accommodate a variety of uses when they're not in use by the Little Leagues and soccer clubs, including pick-up games, Frisbee, kite flying, picnics, walking your dog, playing volleyball or Badminton, etc.
- Want to know exactly how late games will be allowed to be played.
- Little League is only active four months out of the year.
- The Little League wants to be a good neighbor.
- Providing a place for children to get outside and recreate in an organized and social way is a great idea.
- Interested in seeing examples of good and bad sports field designs.
- Clark County Junior Baseball Association wants to use this site after it's built.
- Youth sports create community and teach values.
- Remove the large field and move everything further south.
- Can't wait for it to be built.
- The sports fields will bring more people and eyes on the park, which may make the forested area on the north side of the property less attractive to homeless people and criminals.
- Prefer that the site be developed as a community park (like Fisher Basin Community Park) without sports fields.
- This project is needed.
- Providing space for youth sports will have positive impacts on our children for decades.
- Develop the neighborhood park at the same times as the sports fields.

- Provide space for more than just baseball and soccer.
- Add fencing on the south side of the proposed sidewalk along 82<sup>nd</sup> Street for safety.
- Allow other sports groups and the public to use King's Way Schools new football stadium.
- Concerned about the heavily forested area creating safety and crime problems due to lack of visibility. Other forested parks in the county have these problems.
- Want more detailed information showing how building the fields here would cost less than building them at Fairgrounds Community Park.
- Reduce the amount of impervious surface and design it to be carbon neutral.
- Limit the hours of operation.
- Limit concessions.
- Ensure that the design doesn't alter existing stormwater flow routes/drainage.
- This project will provide fun and wholesome activities for children to enjoy with friends and family.
- The positives of this project outweigh the negatives.
- Build these sports fields somewhere else.
- Consider adding a disc golf course to the plan.
- Consider moving some or all of the sports fields to the west side of the school in the BPA corridor.
- Do not allow alcohol, smoking, fireworks, music concerts or any for-profit/retail events in the park.
- Gate all access points into the park and lock them after hours.
- Lock bathrooms after hours.
- Ensure that Sheriff's Office patrols the park regularly.
- Require full-time, qualified security personnel during games and scheduled events.

#### **Neighborhood Impacts:**

- Opposed to this project because of the disruption it will create for adjacent neighbors (lights, noise, additional traffic and vandalism).
- Concerned that people walking and driving on the east-west driveway will disturb neighbors, especially after night games or practices.
- Do not allow use of a public address (PA) system at this park.
- Do not allow games or practices at night.
- Concerned that this development will cause property values to drop.
- Concerned that any "good neighbor commitment" could be unenforceable. It needs to be legally-binding document.
- Concerned that lighting won't be adequately managed to prevent glare and spillover to adjacent neighborhoods, including light from headlights, concessions stand, parking lot or street lighting, etc.
- Conduct a noise study.
- Install a noise wall or other barrier between adjacent neighbors and the park.

#### **Roads and parking:**

- Concerned about safety on adjacent roads as a result the additional traffic this development will bring.
- Move parking lot down to NE 78<sup>th</sup> Street, move all the fields further south and put the stormwater site between the neighborhood park and a circular driveway around the fields (no connector road).
- Putting speed bumps on the connector road will discourage people from using it, which will not reduce traffic congestion at the 82<sup>nd</sup> Street/St. Johns Road intersection. Intersection improvements are needed.
- Encouraging traffic to divert from St. Johns Road and drive through a residential neighborhood with narrow roads is unsafe.
- Connect 80<sup>th</sup> Street to the park access road to improve mobility through this neighborhood.
- Concerned that additional traffic will use the north-south park connector road as a shortcut to 88<sup>th</sup> Street after a planned development connects these roads. The neighborhood roads north of the county's property are too narrow to accommodate additional traffic.

- Move the access road/driveway to King's Way Schools south of the soccer/lacrosse fields or adjacent to 78<sup>th</sup> Street, so it's farther away from the adjacent homes.
- Concerned about children safely crossing 82<sup>nd</sup> Street while walking or biking to and from the park with all the additional traffic.
- Need a four-way stop at the intersection of the north-south park connector road and 82<sup>nd</sup> Street.
- Routing cross traffic circulation through a park is dangerous.
- Traffic on 82<sup>nd</sup> Street is already terrible and adding more traffic to it will not help.
- Do not want the north-south park connector road. Restrict vehicle access to and from NE 78<sup>th</sup> Street.
- The parking lot is not big enough for a project of this size, and the overflow parking is too far away. Concerned that people will park on neighborhood streets instead.
- Concerned that visitors not familiar with this area will clog up residential streets west of 82<sup>nd</sup> Street looking for shortcuts to 78<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Include a right-turn lane from the north-south park connector road onto 82<sup>nd</sup> Street to help with traffic flow after a game.
- Gate the intersection of the north-south park connector road at 82<sup>nd</sup> Street to restrict after-hours use.
- No not allow on-street parking on 82<sup>nd</sup> Street.

#### **Natural environment, trees and wildlife:**

- Protect the red-tailed hawks that nest on the northwest corner of the property (near the wetland).
- Preserve the mature Douglas fir trees in the northeast corner of the property.
- The birds and animals that live on this property have spiritual significance to the Cowlitz Tribe.
- Concerned that this project will ruin an old-growth forest and harm wildlife.
- Consider using the City of Vancouver's Urban Forestry Management Plan to help guide development.
- The under story in the forested area is important habitat for wildlife. Don't remove it.
- The forested wetland on the northwest corner is a valuable resource, and should be preserved.
- Preserve all big trees in the park. They create needed noise buffers, help filter the air and provide important habitat.
- Reduce the number of fields to reduce impacts to the forested area.
- The forest on site is defined as "Old Growth/Mature Forest" and must be preserved per County Code, PHS and substantive SEPA.
- Birds on site are protected by international treaty, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and substantive SEPA.
- Concerned that lights and noise from games will drive wildlife away.
- The future development of the neighborhood park on the north side of the property will adversely impact the forested area.

#### **Other:**

- Would prefer the county use an open public process to site sports fields.
- Consider doing a land swap with another agency (like Dept. of Natural Resources, etc.) to preserve this property and build the sports fields somewhere else.
- Want a guarantee that this site will never be used for collegiate level games and that alcohol will never be sold on site (in writing and legally binding).
- Conduct an Environmental Impact Statement for this project and provide a cost/benefit ratio.
- Concerned about underground water contamination from the Superfund site, the cleanup in progress, and possible impacts to users of this site.
- Partnership between the county and King's Way church conflicts with the separation between church and state.

END