



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation

Kenneth R. Bounds, Superintendent

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MAYOR'S OFFICE

April 8, 2005

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To: Peter Steinbrueck, Chair, Urban Development and Planning Committee
Tom Rasmussen, Vice Chair, Urban Development and Planning Committee
Richard Conlin, Member, Urban Development and Planning Committee
Jean Godden, Alternate, Urban Development and Planning Committee

From: Kenneth R. *Kan Bounds* Bounds, Superintendent, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Re: **City Council concept approval of pole height exemption for Magnuson Park athletic fields**

City Council soon will act on a request to grant concept approval to allow installation of taller light poles included as part of the Magnuson Park Wetland, Habitat and Athletic Fields Master Plan. As you recall, taller light poles mitigate spill light, sky glow, and glare. This Department of Planning and Development proposal fully complies with direction given by City Council in the master plan (Ordinance #121502) adopted June 2004.

At its March 23, 2005 meeting, the City Council Land Use Committee, at the suggestion of some community members, discussed placing additional conditions on the concept approval, beyond the conditions approved in the master plan.

We urge the City Council to retain the conditions imposed in Ordinance #121502, which was the end result of many years of public process and environmental review that culminated in many hours of City Council deliberation during the spring of 2004. We urge that, at this stage of the project development, no further changes be made to the conditions. Additional conditions, such as limitations between phases, would restrict Parks' ability to implement the master plan as it was adopted by the City Council.

The Parks, Neighborhoods and Education Committee dedicated extensive time in 2004 to reviewing, modifying, and approving the master plan ordinance. As part of these deliberations, the Committee also heard from community members and other members of the public at each of those meetings. Further, a public hearing lasting several hours was held by City Council the evening of April 21, 2004. In preparation for each of those briefings, Parks and City Council staff prepared extensive briefing materials addressing the broad range of questions raised by City Council and the community about phasing, funding, number of fields, hours of operations, and other issues. Bill Alves, Council

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Central Staff, prepared detailed briefing materials, including an analysis of the proposed plan, dated April 19, 2004, and a detailed decision agenda dated May 17, 2004.

At the end of this extensive deliberative process, City Council adopted the master plan by ordinance. The ordinance adopted by City Council includes numerous conditions: it reduced the number of fields proposed by the Executive and the Board of Park Commissioners, limited the number of hours and days when field lights could be used, required the preparation of additional planning details for each phase, required the development of a monitoring and management plan for the wetland area, and imposed restrictions on the development of future phases. Parks will continue to follow the ordinance requirements as we implement the master plan.

City Council's concept approval for the pole height exemption is critical to our implementation of the master plan.

I understand that several City Councilmembers have raised the question of phasing. Phasing issues were addressed extensively during City Council's adoption of the Master Plan in 2004. Please refer to the discussion of phrasing in the May 17, 2004 decision memo prepared by Bill Alves, and in the May 19 and June 2, 2004 PNE decision process, where the committee discussed phasing in detail and considered several proposals. City Council adopted phasing restriction in Section 5c of the ordinance. That section requires a funding plan for phases beyond Phase 1 and Phase 2. That section also requires "provisions for remedying any problems with the sports fields, wetlands and natural areas, or other facilities built in prior phases," and states further: "Identification of any problems in the wetlands or natural areas will be based on the wetland/natural area monitoring and adaptive management reports covering a period of three years."

In light of the extensive public process that has already taken place, and the phasing restrictions already provided by ordinance, I believe that further phasing restrictions tied to concept approval for the pole heights would be redundant, and would hinder our ability to implement the adopted master plan.

Thank you.

cc: David Della, Councilmember, Seattle City Council
Eric Friedli, Director, Enterprise Division, Seattle Parks and Recreation
Geri Beardsley, Supervising Analyst, Legislative Department
Greg Nickels, Mayor of Seattle
Jan Drago, President, Seattle City Council
Jim Compton, Councilmember, Seattle City Council
Nick Licata, Councilmember, Seattle City Council
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Sung Yang, Senior Policy Advisory, Office of the Mayor