

Summary Notes from meeting with PPR Maintenance Staff at Sellwood Riverfront Park

June 29, 2018

In Attendance: Alex Salazar, Maintenance Supervisor, Doug Ludden, Maintenance Staff, Maya Agarwal, Parks Planner, all from Portland Parks and Recreation (PPR) and Debbie Bischoff and Marc Asnis, BPS

Observations: The park is well-used on a weekday afternoon. Predominant use is a dog park with unleashed (and leashed) dogs all through park and on beach/in-river. Other pedestrians, children playing in river and 3 transient boats tied to dock also observed.

Comments from Parks staff:

1. Dogs dominating the park, need to more signage about dog park to near restrooms/parking area for dog owners to read the rules for dog park use. PPR staff said they've seen an increase in dog use of the park and waste generated by dogs in receptacles. Dogs are digging soil resulting in holes that must be patched by the maintenance crew.
2. An enclosed dog park area is desirable except it costs money to build and maintain, will need surface other than grass (bark chips?), and dog owners will oppose, since they have free reign of the park currently. The public would also oppose a fenced dog area if it interferes with summer concerts and other events that use the lawn.
3. There are people that don't come to the park because of loose dogs dominating the park.
4. Is there another swimming beach area for dogs to use in summer when people want to use the river for boating and swimming? Dog owners would likely oppose any restriction to dogs having access to the river.
5. Dog owners do not like PPR maintenance staff spraying grass. Staff said they have an approved spraying plan that minimizes harm to people, animals and the environment. Give maintenance staff a difficult time and are uneducated about the situation.
6. Transient boaters tied up to dock create problems for PPR maintenance staff and park users. They take up space on the dock that recreational boaters would use to make a stop at the park (for restroom use, picnic, etc.). They use park restrooms for cleaning dishes, do laundry (have clogged up the toilets with clothes) and are involved in drug and other bad activities at night.
7. Restrooms are locked up by PPR staff around 8 PM every night.
8. The dock and beach are used by all kinds of boaters and river recreationalists.
9. Dock is in fair to good shape. There is a no fishing sign by dock.
10. The cottonwood trees are a problem – roots interfere with walkways, generally a nuisance for maintenance staff to maintain.
11. Problems with retaining fence/wall between park open area and river's edge. Winter high river levels and inundations like the 1996 flood are the issue, river flood area expands into park and is causing erosion, mud in the park and causes deterioration to the fencing/wall area. The riverside concrete stairway (the southerly one closest to the dock) has been undermined by high-water level events.