

10-17-1978

Introductory Memo to the South Park Blocks Task Force Members, October 17, 1978

Portland (Or.). Bureau of Parks and Recreation

Brad Post

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THE CITY OF
PORTLAND



OREGON

October 17, 1978

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MILDRED A. SCHWAB
COMMISSIONER

From: Brad Post (Task Force Staff) *B*
Office of Superintendent
Bureau of Parks and Recreation

BUREAU OF PARKS AND
PUBLIC RECREATION

DOUGLAS W. BRIDGES
SUPERINTENDENT

To: SOUTH PARK BLOCKS TASK FORCE MEMBERS
-Mary Burki, Downtown Neighborhood Association
(Task Force Chairperson)
-Representative, Bureau of Police
-Representative, Bureau of Human Resources
-Citizens-At-Large

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Subject: BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND PROPOSED WORK PLAN

This introductory memo is intended to provide background information to you regarding the South Park Blocks situation. The memo also sets out a proposed work plan to be followed by the Task Force during the next six weeks. The Portland City Council has asked that this task force review the various issues associated with these blocks and present both its findings and recommendations to Council by mid-November.

IMMEDIATE BACKGROUND

October 3, 1978 - The Downtown Neighborhood Association met to discuss the South Park Blocks situation and review possible solutions. Problems identified regarding the park included: drinking/intoxication, drug use/sales, prostitution/pimping, urinating in public, harrassment, assault, panhandling, lack of play or restroom facilities, lack of police attention, and related issues. Various solutions were also discussed. These included: increased police patrol in general, intensified police surveillance and undercover activity, increased crime reporting by citizens, voluntary citizen patrol, security patrol paid by donation, increased pedestrian use by immediate neighbors, specially developed child and senior citizen recreation programming, installation of play equipment, redesign of park blocks area, installation of temporary portable restrooms, and prohibition of alcohol use or possession in park blocks area.

While no definite resolution of these problems and alternatives was agreed upon, the general consensus among those in attendance was that:

- (1) The problems in this area are complex and not unique,

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- (2) the proposed City Ordinance banning alcohol use in the park would not resolve the problems, and that more comprehensive remedies would be necessary,
- (3) increased police attention is appropriate in general, and that innovative law enforcement actions should be discussed further, and
- (4) the park should be programmed and/or modified to increase park use generally, and that these efforts should focus on youth and elderly activity.

October 12, 1978 - The Portland City Council, while hearing testimony regarding a proposed alcohol prohibition, agreed to Commissioner Mildred Schwab's proposal that an ad hoc Task Force study South Park Blocks issues and make recommendations to Council regarding their resolution. Doug Bridges, Superintendent of Portland Parks and Recreation, was directed to have this Task Force prepare its findings and recommendations within six weeks. Mr. Bridges asked Mary Burki, President of the Downtown Neighborhood Association to chair the Task Force.

WORK PLAN AND TIMELINE - PROPOSED

WEEK 1

October 17 - Neighborhood Association Meeting

- Background
- General Discussion
- First Task Force Work Session (see attached Session Outline)

October 18/19

- Staff Session (see attached Staff Outline)

WEEK 2

October 24/25

- Task Force Work Session (outline to be developed)

October 25/26

- Staff Session
develop findings/analysis

WEEK 3

October 31/November 1

- Staff Session
develop recommendations

WEEK 4

November 8/9

- Task Force Session
report review

November 9/10

- Task Force Session

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WEEK 5

November 15/16

- Task Force Presentation
BEFORE CITY COUNCIL

WEEK 6

November 22/23

- Open

cc. Jayne Carroll, Commissioner Schwab's Office
Margaret Wolszon, Mayor Goldschmidt's Office
Juli Stream, Commissioner Jordan's Office
John Wight, Commissioner McCready's Office
Douglas Bridges, Parks
Michael Kael, Parks
Fontaine Hagedorn, Parks
Ross Walker, Parks

Attachments

- 1st Session Outline - Task Force
- Staff Outline
- Selected background materials

First Task Force Session - Outline

- I. Introduction - "The Process"
 - establish Task Force objectives

- II. Problem Identification
 - law enforcement issues/problems
 - park usage at present
 - park design/facilities
 - neighborhood needs
 - offender/abuser groups
 - related problems

- III. Analysis of Causes and Remedies
 - (causes)
 - low park use/pedestrian biased
 - lack of park facilities
 - site provided "opportunity" to develop vice market place
 - deficient police attention
 - dislocated transient groups (youth, vice offenders, transients, drunks)

 - (remedies)
 - park use options: programs and facilities
 - law enforcement strategies
 - legislative alternatives
 - volunteer options
 - other

Next Week

- II. Analysis (continued)

- III. Develop Recommendations
(with funding strategy where appropriate)

- IV. Finalize Report Outline

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Staff Session Outline - Proposed

The following steps should be followed by Task Force staff member in preparing findings and recommendations for Portland City Council:

- (1) Identify specific Task Force objectives in terms of expected outcome.
- (2) Identify specific problems to be included in study area - define each problem and collect data as necessary.
- (3) Analyze the origin of each problem and assess the remedies proposed in terms of each problem area.
- (4) Prepare Task Force findings and alternative courses of action with funding strategies where appropriate.
- (5) Prepare Task Force recommendations.
- (6) Present draft report to Task Force for review, modification and approval.
- (7) Meet with city officials and bureaus as necessary to brief them regarding report.
- (8) Prepare presentation before City Council.

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