

FAUNTLEROY WATERSHED COUNCIL
Meeting #35, January, 2008, 7 p.m., Fauntleroy Church

ATTENDEES

Watershed residents: Judy Pickens, Dennis Hinton, Steve Bomkamp, David Follis, Dick Sleight, Elizabeth Butler, Tom Linde

Fauntleroy Community Association: Phil Sweetland

Fauntleroy Church: Randy Sleight

Seattle Public Utilities: Kathy Minsch, Julie Hall, Katharine Lynch, Miles Mayhew

Seattle Parks: Carol Baker

Puget Soundkeeper Alliance: Chris Wilke

Facilitator: Randy Sleight

Scribe: Dennis Hinton

NOTES

1. Introductions

2. November 8 minutes

Approved as circulated.

3. Treasurer's report

Dennis Hinton reported \$2,711.96 in the Council checking account.

4. In the media

Dennis reported two major daily newspaper stories, in the *Seattle P-I* and *Times*, on December 28, regarding SPU's 2007 State of the Waters Report. Both stories included Fauntleroy, Longfellow, Piper's, Taylor, and Thornton - Seattle's major creek watersheds. The *P-I* story featured an interview and photo of Judy Pickens, while the *Times* story featured Thornton Creek.

Also in the news: a story in the winter issue of *EarthCorps Connections* about our reach-to-the-beach project; a story in the winter issue of People For Puget Sound's newsletter featuring Judy as a founder of the Fauntleroy Watershed Council; and a story in the fall "Explorer" section of the *West Seattle Herald* about the neighborhood, including the watershed Council and its activities.

5. Presentations

Chris Wilke, pollution prevention director, Puget Soundkeeper Alliance

Fauntleroy Cove and creek were included in a recent study by this water advocacy group, which looked at Olympia oyster populations and chemical levels in Puget Sound. The study found traces of zinc and arsenic, but no heavy-metal readings from the creek or cove exceeded state standards for fresh- or saltwater. Chris noted a growing problem in all waters of toxic chemicals from plastics. Suggestions for citizens to

prevent further water contamination included driving less, cleaning up after pets, and finding alternatives to the most toxic plastics.

Action item: After the meeting, Chris offered to make water-quality signs for posting around the watershed (park, fish-ladder viewpoint). Judy will follow up with him to meet his end-of-the-month deadline.

State of the Waters 2007: Julie Hall, aquatic ecologist, Seattle Public Utilities
Fauntleroy Creek is one of five Seattle area watersheds included in this extensive baseline report about our urban creeks and small lakes. Other creeks included in Volume 1 are Longfellow, Piper's, Taylor, and Thornton. The report focuses on the ecological health of aquatic areas as impacted by the last 150 years of urbanization. As it relates to Fauntleroy:

Physical conditions: The creek drains a 149-acre watershed and has 1.6 miles of channel (mainstem and tributaries); it is the smallest of the city's main watercourses. Nine city storm drains discharge into the creek. Anadromous fish are able to access 35% of channel habitat, greater than any other watershed in the city.

Water quality: Fecal coliform in our creek exceeds state standards in certain areas and at certain times. Dissolved oxygen and temperature meet standards. Although far from ideal, macroinvertebrate populations (based city sampling in the lower creek) are the best in the city (based on a small number of samples).

While problems remain, Julie and the other SPU folks present commended the Watershed Council for its creek advocacy and action over the past several years. We have a strong partnership with SPU and others and have demonstrated our commitment to working the problem related to stream hydrology, water quality, and habitat. Identifying these critical areas and having a plan to do something about them is the purpose of this body of work.

In response to a question about the status of SPU monitoring of the effectiveness of large woody debris in the upper creek, Katherine Lynch said that staff had been diverted from the study but that monitoring pins are still in place to pick up the study at any time.

Miles Mayhew is in charge of following up on report recommendations related to public outreach. A citywide emphasis may happen in the fall; he will stay in touch with us.

Julie provided Judy with one full set of report documents and a CD, "Science Framework for Ecological Health in Seattle's Streams" (available to any interested Council member), as well as several CDs of the report. The report is at www.seattle.gov/util/services. Follow the links to "Restore Our Waters" and the *State of the Waters Report*.

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6. Agency updates/news

Carol Baker, Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation

Kiosks: Carol offered to provide and install a used kiosk at the 97th Ave. S.W. park entrance. David Follis and Steve Bomkamp volunteered to help with public outreach about exact placement. Judy noted that the kiosk at S.W. Barton Street could use some repair; Carol noted that graffiti there needed to be addressed, as well.

Action item: Judy will forward contact information to Carol for David, Steve, and Scott Dolfay, plus details about work needed at Barton Street.

Wayfinding signage: Carol described what is now standard wayfinding signage for Seattle's parks (recycled plastic posts with incised lettering). Because she has no budget for this project, she is working on what maintenance staff could do if we purchased the posts (approx. \$50 each) and advised about locations.

Action item: David will propose locations and lettering for Council and Parks consideration.

Slippery boardwalk in the park: It is indeed slippery; Carol fell while researching the problem! Trails staff has advised that shingles or abrasive strips could be installed in the worst areas this summer. She is in discussion with carpentry staff, who may have something else to suggest. No money is available for wholesale replacement but she is optimistic that a solution can be found.

Kathy Minsch, Seattle Public Utilities: She briefly reiterated that SPU has a group planning major water-quality outreach this year around requirements of NPDES (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) permitting. She will have more to report next meeting.

State Department of Ecology: In Sinang Lee's absence, Judy relayed her report. DOE staff members assigned to seaweed removal in Fauntleroy Cove have met with permitting agencies to understand limitations. The consultant, David Anderson, is exploring several options for what to do with the seaweed when it's brought to land. Regarding the fecal-coliform project, Sinang and Dave Garland have done a second round of sampling along the creek and pinpointed one "hot spot." More to come next meeting.

7. Upper-watershed projects/news

Church/Parks easement: Randy Sleight reported that approval of the easement is on Sunday's agenda for a congregational vote (required for property matters). He expects

approval. Parks property manager, Marylou Whiteford, will then finalize the documents for approval by the City Council (also required for property matters).

Fenton Glen restoration: Judy reported that she has an estimate for engineering design, which includes bank shoring along the Forest Court tributary. The Council can apply for funding from the city's Aquatic Habitat Matching Grant Program in late spring, for work to be done in 2009. Katie Muller with the Seattle Green Partnership has a lead on possibly using the site as a test plot for addressing highly invasive *lamiastrum*.

Rogue trail elimination: Judy reported that she's working with local Cub Scout leaders on a project to shut down a rogue trail near the Barton Street entrance; it leads to a precipice high above the creek and an eroding path down to the water. The project would involve installing a natural barricade at the precipice, planting roses and other natives (left over from creek projects), and making the trail "disappear" by using leaves and branches as camouflage. She will coordinate with Parks senior gardener, Phil Renfrow.

8. Lower-watershed projects/news

Water-quality outreach: Elizabeth Butler summarized a pilot project to reach out to cove residents about what is causing the green tide and how to reduce nutrients going into the cove. The plan calls for using/adapting resources already available from agency partners and a "coffee klatch" approach for face-to-face communication. Elizabeth noted that, because of several complexities, she and Judy decided last month to forego the \$5,000 allocated by King County to the Fauntleroy Community Association for green-tide response.

Reach to beach: Judy reported that the newly restored channel and flood plain worked well during recent high water; the creek left its banks but no neighbors flooded and it settled back in as soon as the storm passed. Some adjustment of logs pinned at the mouth had to be done. The project engineer will be addressing erosion there, putting down coir matting and coir logs to stabilize the area until plant roots can take over; Judy is hustling volunteers to help with installation.

Judy also said that the interpretive-sign project for the ferry pier is moving along. She is working with agency partners on text and Karen Brussat Butler is working on art.

Reach above fish ladder: Judy reported significant erosion of log weirs installed in 1990 by the first Summer Youth Employment crew. SPU staff will soon come have a look as the area is in city right-of-way.

Smolt report 2007: Having somehow overlooked hearing an out-migration report in the spring, the Council heard the basics from Tom Linde, who with Steev Ward, installed and monitored the smolt trap in the fish ladder. Tom reported 24 smolts in April and May, measuring between 4.5" and 5". The really good news, he noted, was that, unlike some years, release fry stayed in the creek; fewer than a dozen landed in the trap.

Action item: Judy will share this report with our colleagues at SPU and the Wild Fish Conservancy.

9. Executive Committee projects/news

Stormwater code update: Randy represented the Council at the second information session for creek representatives (Jan. 9) with Robert Chandler (SPU). He summarized aspects of proposed wording that he thinks problematic. A draft update will be released in February for public comment.

Action item: Randy will draft a letter for Council approval, detailing areas of concern in the draft stormwater code update.

2007 annual report: Judy reported that it is nearly complete and should be ready to circulate within a few days.

Fauntleroy documentary: Judy reported this new project, which grew out of centennial planning by the church. It will encompass the history of the neighborhood, current information, and challenges for nurturing community in a highly urbanized setting. She is project grant writer and administrator and will see that environmental progress is included in the 30-minute DVD, due in mid July.

Food Fest: Phil Sweetland noted that the annual community Food Fest is set for March 18 and that space is reserved for the Council to have a table.

Action item: Judy will scope out what to have at the table and call on other Council members to assist during the event.

Next meeting: 7 p.m. Thursday, March 13, @ Fauntleroy Church

Agenda items will include

- response to the draft stormwater code update
- status of drainage concerns raised by the Council last winter
- water-quality outreach planning in the wake of the *State of the Waters* report
- wayfinding signage in the park - locations, funding, logistics