

Campbell Creek Estuary Master Plan

2nd Public Meeting
Wednesday, June 13, 2012

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Location:

Bayshore Clubhouse
3131 Amber Bay Loop
Anchorage, Alaska

Brief Schedule:

6:00pm – 6:15pm	Introduction
6:15pm – 7:00pm	Spectrum Item Discussion
7:00pm – 8:30pm	Site Map, Group Design
8:30pm – 9:30pm	Group Presentations

Attendees:

Public
Representatives/Volunteers with:
 Alaska Center for the Environment (ACE)
 Great Land Trust (GLT)
 Friends of the Anchorage Wildlife Refuge
 Municipality of Anchorage, Parks and Recreation
 Various Community Councils
 USKH, Inc.

Summary:

This was the second public meeting held for the Campbell Creek Estuary master plan. The goal of the evening was to collect input and formulate alternatives to development with the public.

Phil Shepard, the executive director of The Great Land Trust, started the discussion with a brief introduction. He reviewed how the project came to be, what the funding sources

are and the master plan process. Due to the amount of questions related to dog policy at the first meeting, Mark McCaffery, a park planner with the Municipality of Anchorage's Parks & Recreation, gave an overview of the city's policy on dogs in parks. He explained that no municipal parks directly prohibit dogs but it could be possible through city approval.

After addressing that the land is not yet technically a park but is classified as a nature reserve and the concern that no development should take place, the meeting shifted to the workshop portion. Dwayne Adams, a landscape architect with USKH, explained the two exercises at each table.

The first was a spectrum graphic with ten categories. Each category had four levels of development available. The categories and levels of development were generated from previous meetings, public input, and the potentials, as per the conservation easement. Each individual had the task of placing a dot at whichever level of development they found most appropriate. Overall the majority of dots were placed on the less-developed options. (See **Appendix C - Spectrum Diagrams** for overall results and each group's graphic).

The second part of the group workshop was to draw on the site map physical plans. Groups drew trails, outlooks, fences, parking lots and other amenities they envision. Whether trails went down into the estuary and where the parking lot was placed were some of the main conflicts. Although conflict arose, many drawings reflected a similar level of development, with a few trails and outlook spots. (See **Appendix D - Site Map Diagrams** for each group's drawing and an illustration of their diagrams).

The evening ended with a representative of each table discussing their conclusions for the development spectrum and the site map. (See **Appendix A - Group Presentation Points** for a bulleted list of points made).

The next meeting will be held on June 27th at 6:00pm with the stakeholder group who will review the results from this meeting and further develop the vision for this property.

Appendix A

Group Presentation Points:

Group 1

- *Minimal development*
- *5-10 parking spaces*
- *No bathroom*
- *Fence along north property line*
- *Boardwalk and bird blind at top of bluff*
- *Either boardwalk or hardened surface*
- *Gate at parking lot*
- *No lights*

Group 2

- *No dogs*
- *Caretaker*
- *Maintained meadow*
- *Concrete vault*
- *Bring people into the marsh*

Group 3

- *Parking*
- *Trail along edge of meadow*
- *Seasonal camping host*
- *Seasonal closure*
- *Signage and fence to detour social paths*
- *Protect nesting crane, they are easily disturbed*

Group 4

- *Setback from property line*
- *Signage telling what information*
- *Access hours*
- *Boardwalk only at one lookout*
- *ADA not primary focus*

Group 5

- *No need to explore "different habitat"*
- *No dogs*
- *Parking furthest away from houses with minimal spaces*
- *Follow the bluff*
- *Get view (remove trees)*
- *No bathrooms*

Group 6

- *Phase development*
- *Need main objective outlined*
- *Main objective community education*

- *Trail surface light penetrating*
- *Not the place for exercise*
- *Estuary access seasonal access*
- *Signage at top*
- *Allow access to estuary*
- *Minimally screened*
- *Parking lot lighting for safety*
- *Needs mission statement*

Group 7

- *No development*
- *Use “user” groups to take stewardship*
- *Educational experience*
- *Old homestead site*
- *“plastic” surface to avoid swamping*
- *No dogs*
- *Campground host*
- *Infrastructure related to user groups*
- *Homestead history*

Appendix B

Additional Comments:

A flyer focused on three main topics was passed out during the meeting, the following are public comments.

1) List the Phasing you feel is appropriate:

- *Start small/Go slow (multiple citations)*
- *Buffer between neighbors and area parking (multiple citations)*
- *Start with single loop trail- loop around meadow (multiple citations)*
- *Foliage barrier around parking lot (multiple citations)*
- *Keep this as a reserve. (multiple citations)*
- *Monitor and maintain a restroom. (multiple citations)*
- *Start small and simple, engineer access to interest points.*
- *Start with the focus on the bluff, and if interests indicate a desire to access the treed area in the northeast, then consider adding a primitive path, with avoidance considerations away from moose bedding and calving areas.*
- *No access to bottom of bluff initially, and if it appears people go down on their own, add an engineered path and viewpoint at a later date.*
- *Outhouse or not? I vote for one- when the outhouse at the Kincaid Motocross was closed, the trails became the bathroom.*
- *A seasonal host will be essential if there are closures (seasonal, or time of day) or prohibitions (no dogs, or dogs on leash, or no bicycles). The Muni has no park enforcement cadre. Start early- if bad uses get established, you can't stop them.*
- *Room for expansion of parking lot.*
- *Small unlit parking lot un-gated- one lot only*
- *Boardwalk lookout with telescope 11*
- *Info signage- educational*
- *No fencing*
- *Culvert may need pipe for path*
- *Narrow compact path- wood chip*
- *Someday add rental property/close road*
- *Initial phasing should include parking and security (as in gates)*
- *To use existing road to work with to avoid high costs. Very important to consider the sensitivity of animals/birds in the area.*
- *Talk to street maintenance to understand all the road drainage problems on Lennox Dr. so you realize the problems and costs.*
- *Less invasive to the area to stand by why you are doing this- Enjoy nature.*
- *Respect existing owners in the area and their privacy.*

2) List additional information that you think is needed for any development to take place:

- *"Mission statement" developed*
- *Decide on entrance and parking area*
- *The sedge marsh (sea level) should NOT be open to access, EXCEPT in winter.*

- Sandhill Cranes nest there and are very nervous. If they leave the nest or young chicks, a predator is likely to kill the eggs or chicks.
- Access without a boardwalk would damage marsh vegetation severely, except when frozen.
- Any boardwalk would create extra noise (which frightens cranes even more than seeing people) bring people too close to birds, and encourage jumping off into the marsh.
- This nature area is supposed to protect wildlife.
- Many states and cities close popular areas seasonally to protect breeding wildlife or habitats (check online!).
- It's probably useful to think of this as a "reserve," and regardless, put the use of property in context of nearby areas, e.g. Carr Gottstein Park which I believe is mostly old landfill or garbage, could be a place dog users/others could be redirected.
- Signage at parking lot and view vantage (possible UAA project)
- Trash can in lot (bear proof)
- No lights in parking (one lot, gate)
- No maintenance during winter (accessible but no plowing)
- Wildlife uses and information about nesting and other sensitive information
- Natural resource area designation- does this definition drive our Master Plan?
- We have no real idea in the level of use this park will experience. That makes it hard to plan for parking and trails.
- Is there information available on the wildlife currently there and how they use the site? Most of the use is probably seasonal, which could impact when the park is open.
- Who is going to maintain the area and clean it up if the public is disrespectful?
- Reinvite to check animal habitat.
- If posted info is provided, include a map and rules regarding legal hunting and fishing areas and other info.
- I see no reference for picnic tables or areas and I agree- don't put any in and specifically restrict/outlaw any picnicking.
- Lennox Drive: existing storm water drainage problems have been endemic for many years, so IF any development is to be placed at Lennox, substantial road and drainage improvements would be required (and costly).

3) List management prescriptions (seasonal closures, dog restrictions, etc.) that you feel are appropriate:

- Seasonal closures- depending on the trail plan, in general area needs to be managed to limit breeding/nesting disturbance, wildlife conditions, etc.(multiple citations)
- NO DOGS to keep wildlife in the area. Don't worry, they will go to other parks. (multiple citations)
- Dogs should be on leash all the time, or else prohibited. I suggest a sign that says, "If dogs are reported off leash, they will be prohibited entirely." Loose dogs in ACWR can legally be shot, and aren't we managing in harmony with ACWR?
- No seasonal closure
- Eventually signs directing that the place is a reserve and supports habitat is useful.
- Post a sign asking public users to email photos, or log sightings and use from the experience.
- Encourage limited use and explain.

- *Yes, people ski the bike path in April and should be encouraged to do something other than drive.*
- *If toilets eventually become necessary, designate an uncomfortable area and request money.*
- *Warning signs about dangers of mud flats are warranted and helpful to keep habitat and reserve.*
- *No caretaker*
- *Path shouldn't cross drive or visitors will use drive for trail*
- *Limited hours*
- *Closed in winter to avoid a mess.*
- *Have camp host as project is developed (5 years out)*
- *Tailor access and activity according to season, ie more activity and some access to wetland during winter*
- *How do we control snow machine access to wetland in the winter?*
- *Keep dogs on leash in the park*
- *There is minimal wildlife in the park during the winter so more of the park could be open to people and dogs then. Dogs should be on leash in the summer.*
- *Close the park at night.*
- *Information boards need to be maintained from graffiti.*
- *Important to have a place in parking lot to lock bikes.*
- *Engineer a method on the bluff to restrict any access over the bluff, to the lowlands. One idea might be to provide leveled platforms so people won't/can't jump the guardrails and go down the bluff.*
- *Cut bluff trees to permit unobstructed viewing of the lowlands from specified points on the bluff.*