

Snohomish County

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Consultants

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**PURPOSE**

Recap the needs and concerns shared at the November 17, 2013 ad hoc meeting, gather needs and concerns of the new committee members and returning members, and attempt to prioritize the preliminary uses due to the limited space available on site.

**DISCUSSION**

***Introduction***

Kevin Teague welcomed everyone and gave a brief summary of the origin and purpose of the project. Derrick then recapped the overall project process and schedule. He then introduced the full design team using a chart.

Following introductions, Derrick then requested that each committee member share their specific needs and concerns, beginning with the newest members of the committee. The following are their comments:

**COMMENTS**

- *Sierra Club*
  - 1) Sierra Club members are significant users of trails in the area.
  - 2) Concerns focus on sound and safety as trails are being used.
    - a) rogue shooting (shooting without means of confinement) is the primary concern, both at the Sky Valley location and other nearby areas.
  
- *Neighbor*
  - 1) Closest neighbor to the site.
  - 2) Concern about contamination of the wetlands and the watershed, as any contamination will have negative effects on his property and drinking water (i.e. lead contamination from the shooting range).
    - a) There are likely already considerable levels of lead in the soil from current and past shooting in the area.
  - 3) In response to a question about fire department involvement, it was clarified that Fire District 5 responds to medical emergencies but DNR responds to fire issues.
  - 4) Another concern focused on how sound from shooting would be addressed at the site.
    - a) Currently hears shooting every day from rogue shooters.
  - 2) it was questioned whether or not the original EIS (developed along with the first plan some years ago) is still valid.
  
- *Snohomish County Sheriff*
  - 1) A legal place for people to shoot will help alleviate some of the rogue shooting already occurring.
  - 2) The sheriff's department likely will not use the facility as they use the Cathcart Range.

- *Pistols/Handguns*
  - 1) Backdrops with sound barriers can be used to reduce sound heard from guns.
  - 2) Pistol bays are needed for various events such as "Cowboy Action," "Three Gun," and IPSC events, as well as for target practice by single handguns.
    - a) Five is the minimum number of bays required; however, the amount considered should be in terms of ideal size of the site rather than minimum numbers required. The facility needs to be large enough to accommodate frequent use. Eight or ten bays would be more practical.
    - b) Pistol bays have targets set at 25, 50, and 100 yards. At least one of those bays is required, especially to make Three Gun happen.
    - c) Three Gun events are those in which the shooter is timed as he fires a pistol, then runs to use a rifle, before running to use a shotgun. Each lane is used for all pistol events, not single use.
  - 3) The site should be designed in such a way that other events need not be shut down for competitions.
    - a) There should be sufficient facilities to accommodate public use on one, competition use on another, and practice on a third.
  - 4) Providing a paintball facility on the site sends a mixed and potentially dangerous message to kids regarding the use of the firearms at the same location.
  - 5) There is a big demand for hunter safety courses.
  - 6) Environmental concerns need to be addressed up front.
  - 7) Consider employing a sound engineer to address and plan for sound concerns.
  - 8) Historic data shows that once a regulated range goes in, illegal shooting in the area decreases drastically.
    - a) Shooters practicing legal use of firearms do not want rogue users to negatively impact their opportunities. Responsible shooters do not want illegal shooters around.
    - b) At Rattlesnake Ridge, another shooting range, unsanctioned shooting went down to near zero after operated range opened.
  
- *Shotguns*
  - 1) The ideal facility size would include ten traps: one for practice, one for public use, and eight for registered events. However, to phase this use in, both financially and for neighbor adjustment, it may be best to build two traps first, then the next four down the road, then the final four, then add skeet.
  - 2) Consider implementing the "non-abrasive" uses at the site first, such as archery, to provide a smooth start to sportsman park operations.
  - 3) Environmental concerns should be addressed at the beginning so that the facility does not have to be modified or reduced later.
    - a) The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) goes into great detail regarding lead containment: 1) how to remove lead from the soil, and 2) how to contain the lead using curtains.
    - b) Lead needs to be scraped off the soil and removed.
  - 4) Although shooting sounds are not desired, there will be sounds from the site and a berm around the shotgun range would help reduce these sounds.
    - a) The shotgun community wants to be a good neighbor.
    - b) Most ranges are not open every day so shooting sounds from the park may not be an everyday occurrence.
    - c) Shotguns put out less sound than rifles and pistols.
  - 5) The range should be oriented to the north for light and downwind of the prevailing wind, thereby reducing impacts on neighbors to the southwest.
  - 6) Scheduling is key when it comes to parking: the site could be scheduled in such a way that overflow parking can occur in other event spaces (e.g. archery) during shotgun competitions.
  - 7) Park operators need to remain in communication with neighbors so that the ranges are not scheduled during outside community or neighborhood activities/events.
  - 8) When firing, only the person firing should be up: everyone else should be behind him.
  - 9) All of the events fit in a pistol range.
  - 10) Gun safety classes would be a key function of the facility.
  - 11) Unregulated "rogue" shooters are the most dangerous shooters.
  - 12) Development of the facility as a safe place would reduce illegal shooting in the area and would provide a space for high school rifle teams.
  - 13) The facility will bring commerce to the area.

- *Lake Bronson Association - Neighbors*
  - 1) The Lake Bronson Association has owned the property for several generations and has considerable development at the site.
    - a) The association would not oppose the facility if it can be assured that there will be no impacts to their own facility; they would advertise the facility as an amenity to club visitors. They simply do not want it negatively affecting their use of the area.
      1. The association has approximately 200 full members and 400 - 600 visitors each year.
    - b) The association is open year-round but is used primarily on Saturdays and Sundays in the summer (Memorial Day to Labor Day).
      1. there are large events monthly
      2. large event on August 1<sup>st</sup>
      3. many events last entire weekend
      4. there are some mid-week events
      5. in the winter, the facility is used as well but primarily indoors
    - c) The site utilizes trails and the lake on the association's property.
  - 2) Primary concerns with the development of the sportsman's park include:
    - a) Contamination of the groundwater from concentrated runoff as the association utilizes a spring for drinking water.
    - b) Potential for increased traffic due to possible events at the range.
      1. Consider a previous suggestion of busing to the site as an option or similar strategies to reduce the amount of individual cars traveling to the site.
  - 3) If facility is constructed and generates revenue, more money should be set aside on law enforcement patrolling area for safety and traffic concerns.
- *Archery*
  - 1) FITA is the international organization for archery.
  - 2) Ideally, the range will have covered shooting area to allow for use in the rain.
  - 3) The range could be used by other groups when not in use by archery groups.
  - 4) A long range per FITA is 90 meters from the shooting line to the target and should have a background area beyond.
  - 5) A separate broadhead slash pit should be considered
    - a) A separate area would limit impacts on the land or vegetation from
  - 6) Other ranges in the area include Kenmore, Darrington, and the Flint Tip Range in Enumclaw.
    - a) Darrington Range is on school property.
    - b) Easton has an Olympic-quality facility.
    - c) Granite Falls is a 32-acre archery range facility that is shared with shotguns by overlaying targets for multiple use.
  - 7) Sanctioned archery events could draw 400-500 people.
    - a) Thirty targets are needed for sanctioned events.
  - 8) If the course is small, the same targets can be used twice.
  - 9) While there is no minimum size, the optimum size is 40 acres: 10 acres would be small.
  - 10) Northern orientation and varied topography are ideal for a 3D range.
    - a) Can use land undesirable for other events due to minimal impact and footprint.
    - b) The only impact on the land is a trail between targets.
  - 11) Bow hunter education is also needed.
- *Kevin Teague, Snohomish County Parks*
  - 1) The Parks' department wants a facility that adequately serves all users while having the least possible impact on neighbors.
  - 2) They are also interested in promoting economic activity in the area by development of the facility.
- *Other, Rifles*
  - 1) A 400 yard public range is ideal.
  - 2) 40 benches.
  - 3) Steel Gongs for Targets.

**NEXT STEPS**

Derrick pointed out that at the next meeting the shooting range consultant, Lorin Kramer, will be present and will provide templates of typical ranges to show how different configurations will fit onsite. The committee will review these options for the site and look at areas adjacent to but outside of the site to accommodate full development of the desired program. At the next meeting, a prioritized program (list of facilities and activities to be considered) and a list of the design criteria (a guide for evaluating alternative layouts) will be presented.

There was no consensus on the priority of elements. Each of the shooting representatives naturally considers their sport a priority. Accordingly, Derrick noted that the sport that best fits the current site will be determined, assuming that not all sports/events will fit within the existing boundaries given the extent of wetlands and the desire to minimize impacts on neighbors and adjacent property.

**CLOSING**

The next ad hoc committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 28 from 3:30 to 5:30 PM at the Sultan City Council Chambers.

*These are the minutes, as we understand them. If there are any additions or corrections, contact Bruce Dees & Associates immediately.*