



Agenda Item #: _____

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Cohen and Members of the City Council

FROM: Geoff Dolan, City Manager

DATE: August 4, 2009

SUBJECT: Discussion of Issues Associated with Sand Dune Park and Consider Alternatives Including Referring the Concept of Installing Parking Meters and Creating a Neighborhood Parking Permit Program to the PPIC for Review and Recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council refer the concept of installing parking meters and creating a Neighborhood Parking Permit Program to PPIC for review and recommendation.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

Completion of the study will be funded through existing Department operating budgets. There are potential increases in general fund revenue as well as additional costs for administration and maintenance of various operational programs, regulations, meters, special enforcement or override parking programs that may be implemented after the study is completed. These costs will be evaluated and included in the report to City Council.

BACKGROUND:

Over the years, the popularity of Sand Dune Park has steadily increased, and is now regularly used by residents, sports teams, athletes, and fitness groups for the unique exercise challenge to walk or run up the Sand Dune. This increased use is particularly noticeable in the summer with longer and warmer days and substantially increased attendance.

Along with this increased use come increased neighborhood impacts. Residents in the area have voiced concerns about a multitude of problems including; parking, traffic, noise and trash.

To address these neighborhood concerns the City has taken a number of actions over the years, including:

- Construct a traffic circle at the south end of Bell Avenue adjacent to the park.
- Stripe diagonal parking along the west side of Bell Avenue and prohibit parking on the east side.
- Post noise and litter prohibition signs.
- Post Playground warning signs.
- Provide supplemental street sweeping.

- Increased hours of Parks & Recreation staff presence.
- Hiring a Park Ranger.
- Increased Police Patrol.

These measures resulted in some relief to the residents, however, attendance at San Dune Park continues to increase as well as the associated concerns of the neighborhood.

DISCUSSION:

In addition to the above changes that were implemented, the City has studied a variety of other possibilities from limiting use to residents only, to closing the Dune fully or partially, to fencing it or charging for its use as a way to control attendance. All of these more aggressive actions were tabled by City Council.

During this year's budget process a new concept was presented that has the potential to reduce the activity as well as generate revenue to offset some of the of the City's costs for monitoring the dune. The idea is to consider metering certain areas such as Bell Avenue and the Public Works lot and implement a Permit Parking program in the neighborhood. City Council asked that this issue be brought to a regular Council meeting for discussion and possible referral to a Commission.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that City Council refer this issue to the PPIC for study and a report back to City Council. The PPIC should actively seek neighborhood and community input and address all of the following issues:

- Where should/could meters be installed,
- What are the recommended hours of the meters and hours of enforcement,
- What type of meters should be installed,
- What is the recommended hourly charge,
- What are the estimated costs to implement as well as the projected revenue,
- Where could/should a neighborhood parking program be implemented,
- How would it be implemented, i.e. an opt in program,
- What would the parking hours or restrictions be,
- How would guests be accommodated,
- What are the expected impacts to park users and residents.

It is recommended the PPIC not be limited to the above issues but consider any other aspects to a metering and permit parking program that should arise.

This study will be coordinated by the City Traffic Engineer and will require input from a variety of City departments including; Police, Parks and Recreation, Public Works and Finance.

Attachments: Sand Dune History

Chronological History for Sand Dune Park

Between 2000 and 2004, the City Council, Parks and Recreation Commission and a city/neighborhood committee met numerous times to develop and implement measures that would counteract the problems that were occurring at Sand Dune Park.

The problems that were communicated to the City by the residents (most living at the bottom of the dune) were:

- Noise from car alarms and stereos
- Noise from participants shouting and using bull horns
- Speeding along Bell Avenue
- Blocking driveways
- Trash and litter left behind on the streets
- Disrespecting park rules
- Monopolization of the dune by adults
- Before and after hours use violations

In the year 2000, the City implemented the following measures to initially address the above problems.

2000

- Open the park daily at 6:00 a.m. instead of opening at dawn
- Close the park at 9:00 p.m. from April 1 through October 31
- Establish quiet hours (enforced by Parks and Recreation staff member) from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. to closing, daily
- Eliminate the four parking spaces in the parking lot south of the tot lot for all except service vehicles and handicap parking (two spaces each)
- Divide the dune 50/50 with 50% for exercise use the 50% for recreational/youth use
- Staff the park daily with Parks and Recreation personnel to enforce the above policies for an initial period of at least six months starting at 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily
- Post signs at the top and bottom of the stairs adjacent to the dune that state "For your safety please no running or jogging on the stairs"
- Remove and replace all current rules and regulations signs. Install signs that were developed by the sub-committee that welcomes users of the park and requests their cooperation in a friendly manner

2002

- Added an additional \$22,155 to annual budget to staff the park all operating hours with part-time staff
- Post signage along Bell and in the park to communicate operational rules

- Passed an ordinance prohibiting running on the stairs
- Installed a temporary fence on the dune for two weeks to get the attention and cooperation of those participants creating problems in the neighborhood
- Place extra trash cans along Bell Avenue and at the bottom of the dune
- The group use permit requirement was lowered from 50 to 15
- Groups were prohibited from using the dune any time other than Monday through Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

2003

- **Park Ranger Hired** - The full-time position of Park Services Enforcement Officer (Park Ranger) was established to provide staff support in the area of park rules and regulations in all city parks, fields and facilities. The Park Ranger has the authority to write citations for municipal codes.
- Bell Avenue was redesigned to create angled parking on the west side while red curbing the majority of the east side adjacent to resident's homes
- A traffic circle (roundabout) with a drop-off area at the entrance of the park was installed to improve traffic congestion

2004

- Dune closed temporarily for two weeks with a fence to change the behavior of the participants at the park
- Staff to conduct hourly rounds to remove excessive trash left on Bell Avenue
- Rearrange the Park Ranger's priorities and routine. Now the ranger goes directly to Sand Dune and waits for a slow period to make his visits to other parks
- Signage installed on the roundabout advising motorists "No stopping anytime-violators will be cited"
- Police Department and PACS officers assigned to enforce violations that are observed through routine and directed patrols
- The area traffic officer and area parking officer assigned to work with park leaders to address issues or problems as they arise
- The Police Department works closely with the on-duty park ranger to provide consistent and coordinated enforcement efforts
- Municipal Code #12.48.055 was adopted, which allows the Parks and Recreation director to temporarily close the dune when necessary
- Municipal Code #12.48.053 was adopted prohibiting the use of personal exercise equipment
- Increased street sweeping on Bell Avenue