

Notes from INC PARC meeting February 17, 2015.

INC PARC met February 17 at Brookdale U. Park, 2020 S. Monroe. Present were: co-chairs Maggie Price and Katie Fisher, Steve Fisher, Cindy Johnstone, Kathleen and Jay Rust, Kathleen Wells, Marlene Johnson, Diana Helper, Hank Bootz, Marie Quinn, Paula Kauffman, Michele Furst, David Matthews, Greg Sorensen, Bridget Walsh, Louis Plachaeski, Karon Miller, Katie McCrimmon, Meg Schomp, and guest speakers Fred Weiss, DPR Dir. of Finance, and Katy Strascina, Exec. Dir. of Denver's Office of Special Events (OSE).

Fred Weiss gave an overview of the work of the OSE, as discussed by the original Stakeholder group including several citizens and representatives from 17 city agencies. The complexity of managing special events led to formation of the OSE by the Mayor. From results of the Stakeholder meetings, OSE staff determined action to take to handle the increasing number of permitted events in Denver's parks. There will be no *new* race events or festival events in 2015, and for enforcement additional rangers have been hired and on-call staff is available. The permit office has a new staff member, and new software improves connections, communication, and accuracy. A national research organization is hired to assess best management options, based on similar concerns in other cities. PARC urged that Denver's situation include its unique characteristics of space and capacity, and that parks *and* parking be a focus.

Katy Strascina said OSE will pull together the complex parts of managing special events. New rules and regulations about future fees, capacity, dates, types of events, and a complete check-list of permits needed, will enable OSE to say "no" to some events, but will be "rolled out" gradually, as the longtime festival promoters must be respected. Each City Council member will get to schedule additionally one race and one event each year which will be added to the city's event schedule. A 311 link is being made. A website will show event information. An OSE outreach liaison person will work with RNOs and businesses, setting up focus groups, imparting information and getting feedback. Also there are two event liaison staff members.

Jay Rust stated INC PARC's opposition to commercial use of parks. PARC spoke about: determining a balance of public park use, including open space; the need for ball parks separate from public parks; having a citizen advisory group for OSE as part of the process; tracking the money and cost analysis; categorizing event types; adding parkland and festival park. OSE believes right now it must work on the present picture, improving the situation at hand.

Katie Fisher said PRAB (Parks/Rec Advisory Board) talked about POFA [?] which permits commercial groups such as yoga classes in parks. DPR is adding five more sites for this use although there has been little request. One new site is in a parkway, which is not a venue for commercial use. PARC opposes this and asks about policy for commercial uses on river-ways, trails? The public meeting on the Pofa changes is at Prab on April 9, 2015 PARC members are urged to send comments on POFA to their council and copy this committee.

Katie McCrimmon spoke on Crestmoor Park, where a developer wants to build a large apartment adjacent using the park as its open space. No traffic study has been done. These matters of capacity, open space, air quality, and safety are of concern to many RNOs. PARC will push with INC ZAP (Zoning and Planning) and INC Transportation groups. Bridget Walsh has posted pollution info for City Park on her website – the Zoo incinerator is a "park use" so the city deems it OK. Marie Quinn said developers must give a percent for public art, and ought to be held to a percent for public open space. She reported that Ruby Hill Park is getting considerably over-activated.

Next PARC meeting, Wed., March 17, 6-8 p.m., 2020 S. Monroe. – Diana Helper, PARC mbr.

