

River Park | Sandy Beach | Britannia Slopes Phase 2
Open Space Workshop: February 12, 2011 – 1:30 to 4:30 pm
Temple B'nai Tikvah – 900 47 Ave. SW

Group 1

Issue: **Water Quality – pollution of Elbow River; riparian health**
 Vegetation – erosion of Sandy Beach & area banks
 Britannia Slopes and top paths
 Impact of dogs on river and riparian areas
 Rafting
 Stewardship

Discussion Group Flip Chart notes:

Water Quality & Riparian Health

First Principle – Management of the park for the park

- Natural functionality
- Design
- Use
- Will respect and enhance riparian health and water quality

Economic factor – budget

E. coli – What is the source?

- Wild life, storm sewers, Stampede in lower Elbow
- Study to pinpoint the source of E. coli in Elbow River

Urine crystals a problem

- Too many dogs, out of control
- Water quality outside of Calgary downstream concern

E. coli / Bacteria Contamination

Britannia side, there were 61 dog droppings!! (One day count), this is a big issue
Complained to friend from West Vancouver...Dog walkers with too many dogs!!

- Check West Vancouver Bylaw!
- Bylaws for dog walkers! Why not in Calgary??
- How many dogs per person for dog walkers
- Bylaws are not being upheld by City - NOT BEING ENFORCED

Vegetation

Health of pruned trees

- How will tree be considered in the management plan?
- How to deal with priorities in short and long-term
- Replant new large trails created by bikers, students riding to school
- Connect with Elboya School – educate students and use school to help revitalize bank planting etc.

- NE Poplar, why? – Colorado Spruce

Work done on west side of Sandy Beach not east side

Rafting

Permit system for rafting on river!!

- Regulate rafting system
- Ban drinks and food on rafting re bottle issue

Dam - if it is going to stay

Managing the non-flooded area

Areas need to be fenced off to help new vegetation grow

Schools

- Generate interest in an outdoor natural garden for the kids
- Education of the children

Solution for lack of natural flooding (for tree regeneration)

- Look at alternative types of trees
- Appropriate shrubs, understory vegetation – indigenous species
- Control of invasive species by mechanical and cultural methods

Restricted Access Areas (for protection)

- Protection of vegetation
 - Protective aspect for wildlife
1. Restrict certain types of use at all times
 - a. No dogs
 - i. No dogs in water either
 - ii. No dogs in riparian area
 2. No people? In restoration / seasonal
 3. Seasonal
 - a. No access during mating, nesting and brooding
 4. A dog free valley
 - a. As soon as you start going downhill it's dog free
 5. Only on leash down hill (on path)

Does not want to see paved pathways on the ridge!

Maybe case (study) for paved paths in some area

Protection of River System

- You can't fish the river now
- Tramping down of the aquatic system
- Permit system for rafters
- Education and enforcement
- Restrict access to river to respect and protect aquatic habitat
 - Fencing, permits, enforcement is crucial – through bylaws
 - This means both people and dogs
 - Should AHS test the water every day? Every week? After rainfall? – First flush
 - Peak of E. coli concentration
 - Pretreatment of ALL storm water

- Testing the storm water for bacteria, hydrocarbons everything, salt, metal
- E. coli from other areas of river upstream (reservoir and above)
- Planting of indigenous species
- Repair of the highly eroded river bank by non engineered techniques
- Five-year dog study is required!!
- Do your homework on erosion
 - Deer, coyotes
- Take it in context
 - Do not just blame dogs for erosion
 - Erosion was always there it has not just happened over past 5-years, though it is getting worse
- Pathways and development
 - Interfere with surface and water flows result vegetation is affected negatively it no longer has access to water down stream slope from pathway

Stewardship

- Schools
- Community association
- NGOs
 - Calgary River Valleys
 - Cows and Fish
 - Area preservation society
- This park NEEDS its own preservation society!!
- Ongoing review needed
- Plan reassessment at least every 5-years