

**TO:** CITY MANAGER 1999 September 16  
**FROM:** DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES  
**SUBJECT:** DISTURBANCES AT MAYWOOD PARK  
**PURPOSE:** To provide Council with an update on the issue of disturbances at Maywood Park.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT this report be received for information purposes.

**REPORT**

At its meeting of 1999 September 15, the Parks and Recreation Commission received the above noted report and adopted the two recommendations contained therein.



Kate Friars, Director  
PARKS, RECREATION  
AND CULTURAL SERVICES

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Attachment  
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cc: O.I.C. R.C.M.P.

**SUBJECT: DISTURBANCES AT MAYWOOD PARK**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That a copy of this report be forwarded to Council.
2. That a copy of this report be forwarded to Mr. Kowarsky.

**REPORT**

**BACKGROUND**

At the Council meeting of 1999 August 9th, the issue of disturbances by youth at Maywood Park was discussed; with a request for Commission to review the situation.

Also appearing under correspondence on this agenda is a letter from Mr. Kowarsky expressing concern about the noise disturbances from a group of youth at Maywood Park over the past few months and enquiring what action the City has taken to remedy the situation.

Staff were first made aware of the concerns by the residents living around Maywood Park in July 1999. At that time, the Youth Services staff began to make frequent visits to Maywood Park as well as other areas around Metrotown in the latter part of the evenings to monitor youth activity. Staff did not observe any illegal or inappropriate behaviour at Maywood Park from youth during these visits. Not with standing this, staff contacted the R.C.M.P. District Commander for Southwest Burnaby to discuss this situation and advise that staff were making site visits to the park. Some of the youth that are in question that frequent the park also attend the South Central Youth Centre. Staff followed up with these youth regarding the concerns of the residents and the need for everyone to be respectful of appropriate noise level in the park, particularly at night. There was an agreement from the youth that they would speak with their peers to assist staff.

In August, staff received the correspondence from Mr. Kowarsky. Staff immediately addressed the concerns by calling a meeting with the youth, many of whom are known to frequent Maywood Park. A meeting was held August 18th at South Central Youth Centre. Approximately 45 youth attended the meeting to discuss the complaints from the neighbours around the park. The youth were cooperative during the meeting and explained it was not their intent to have residents feel threatened by their presence in the park and apologized for this perception. They did express their concerns that they view the park as a public place for their use and were concerned that all of the inappropriate behaviour was blamed on them. Staff replied that this was one of the reasons why it would be beneficial for the youth to be involved with the development of a positive solution to this issue.

The outcome of this meeting was the selection of a group of 5 teens who would represent the larger group of youth. This small group had further discussions with staff. The group advised staff that they would meet with their peers and encourage them not to visit the park late at night. If they did frequent the park, the youth would help to monitor the noise level and be respectful of the residents. The youth also recommended additional options to address this issue such as having a place to go late at night to socialize. The other options discussed included flexing and extending the South Central Youth Centre operating hours and looking at alternative space for late night programs to compliment the late night gym program at Bonsor Centre. There was also the suggestion to arrange a meeting with representatives of youth, the neighbours and staff to further discuss this issue and come to a positive resolve. Staff will report back to Commission on the results of this community meeting.

### **SUMMARY**

Staff have responded to the letter from Mr. Kowarsky (Attachment #1) to advise of the actions taken to date and to enquire if a group of residents would be willing to meet with youth and staff. Mr. Kowarsky was also advised in the letter that the R.C.M.P. are interested in this process and would like to be involved in any future meeting with youth and residents. While staff wait for a response from the residents they will continue to make park visitations and monitor the situation. The Parks Patrol will continue to make site visits to Maywood Park and log any inappropriate behaviour. When inappropriate behaviour is observed the Parks Patrol will report the incident to the R.C.M.P.

A report outlining the outcome of the proposed community meeting will be forwarded to Commission. Further, staff will pursue the adjustment of the youth centre hours to better accommodate the needs of the youth and explore other options with the youth to address their needs for late night space.

CL:mc

Attachment

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cc. O.I.C. R.C.M.P.



Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

August 25, 1999

Kowarsky & Company  
Suite 1050 - 1185 West Georgia Street  
Vancouver, B.C.  
V6E 4E6

Attention: Jacob B. Kowarsky

Dear Mr. Kowarsky:

Further to your correspondence to the Burnaby Parks and Recreation Commission dated August 17, 1999 regarding youth disturbances at Maywood Park, I wish to bring you up-to-date of some latest developments pertaining to this issue.

Both the Centre Supervisor of the South Central Youth Centre, located on Jubilee Avenue in Metrotown, and I learned of your concerns shortly after they were discussed at the Burnaby City Council meeting on August 9, 1999. We felt that it was appropriate to take immediate action related to your concerns and as a result convened a meeting with a large group of young people, many who are known to us to frequent the park area in question. We met with approximately forty-five youth on the evening of August 18 at the South Central Youth Centre to discuss the issues arising from neighbour complaints in the Maywood Park area. Many present at that meeting admitted to "hanging out" in the park in the evening hours.

The youth were very cooperative during the meeting and expressed their own concerns over this matter. First, they said that they were sorry that any residents would feel threatened or annoyed by their presence at the park. They explained that they in no way meant any harm to the neighbourhood and were apologetic about disturbing neighbours although they claim that they have not committed any illegal acts. They further insisted that there have been others (some adults) who have created noise problems in the area sometimes resulting in their group being unfairly blamed for behavior they are not responsible for. Several of the youth commented that they also live in the same neighbourhood adjacent to the park and that they view this space as theirs as well and that they should also have a right to free use and enjoyment of it. We explained in some detail the concerns of the neighbours as we understand them to be as well as asked them to consider the situation had it been them or their families being disturbed.

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YOUTH RECREATION SERVICES  
101 - 4946 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 4H7

Telephone: (604) 433-6032  
or (604) 294-7339  
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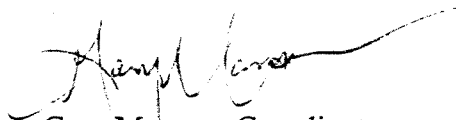
After the session with the larger group we met separately with five individuals voted by their peers as the group representatives (also participants at the park area). This smaller group said that they would do their best to encourage their friends not to hang around at the park particularly in the late evenings. That when they visit the park area in future they will try and remember that neighbours have their right to peace. In addition, several options were generated by the group, some of which our department will pursue (e.g., having the youth centre in Metrotown remain open longer) and one in particular aimed at the neighbours themselves. They are wanting to know if neighbour representatives would be willing to sit down with them so that a constructive solution can be worked out between the parties affected. I feel that this is an option worth considering and am wondering if between us we might be able to facilitate such a meeting.

I would appreciate your feedback on this matter and can be reached at 433-6032. I have spoken with the R.C.M.P. who have also expressed an interest to be involved in the process should this course of action be pursued.

I should add that I have had youth services staff monitoring the situation at Maywood Park during evening hours and have also consulted with our Parks Patrol personnel. We will continue to monitor the situation and are open to any further suggestions you may have.

In the meantime, I would like you to know that our Youth Services staff are always open to feedback from the community in our efforts to create positive and constructive opportunities to young people in the community.

Sincerely,



Gary Manson, Coordinator  
Youth Recreation Services

cc: Kate Friars, Director  
Cathy Lavery, Manager Community Services

