

SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE*

Department:	Dept. Contact/Phone:	CBO Contact/Phone:
Parks and Recreation	Lise Ward/733-9106	Justin Hellier/327.5684

1. BILL SUMMARY

Legislation Title: AN ORDINANCE relating to Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR); authorizing the acquisition of a Conservation and Recreation Easement at the Turner-Koepf House and Garden, commonly known as the Garden House, located at 2336 15th Avenue South; authorizing acceptance of a recording of the Conservation and Recreation Easement for open space, park, and recreation purposes; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

Summary and background of the Legislation:

For decades, the Garden House, previously owned by the Washington State Federation of Garden Clubs, served as a hub for community activities. In October 2018, the Garden House was placed on the market for sale. Although Historic Seattle PDA made an offer to purchase the property, the owner sold the property to a private party. The development and use plans of the private party never materialized and the property remained vacant since it was purchased. The property was up-zoned from single-family to multi-family zoning and there was a threat that the open space around the building could be consumed by new development.

Historic Seattle PDA utilized its existing line of credit to purchase the property on December 23, 2021 as the owner did not want to wait any longer before placing the property on the market. Historic Seattle PDA has developed and is executing a community engagement plan that provides the neighborhood an opportunity to create a vision, mission and program for the property centered on community use, enjoyment, and need. The publicly accessible site and community-focused use of the house will be owned and operated by Historic Seattle PDA as a unified and complimentary whole. The Garden House will return to its longtime use as a community-focused oasis in the middle of a rapidly changing city and for the benefit of Beacon Hill, a neighborhood experiencing rampant gentrification. Historic Seattle PDA will lease the property to a master tenant that will be responsible for operations and curate the property's community-focused use. The house will offer office space for tenants and rental rooms to be used for classes, programming, meetings, exhibits, and performances. The grounds will be available for passive recreation, park/open space enjoyment, historic interpretation, and other uses that complement the needs of the community.

The City of Seattle is utilizing Park District and King County Conservation Futures (CFT) funding (whose application was initiated by Historic Seattle PDA) to purchase the Conservation and Recreation Easement from Historic Seattle PDA and which will allow Historic Seattle PDA to pay its line of credit. As a result of this transaction, the City of Seattle will facilitate a project providing much needed indoor and outdoor space for neighborhood enjoyment and use without any ongoing financial support and underwriting by the City of Seattle.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project? ___ Yes X No

3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation amend the Adopted Budget? ___ Yes X No

The subject property will be acquired with existing appropriation from the Park Fund 19710 and CFT grant revenues approved by interlocal agreement.

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to The City of Seattle that are not reflected in the above, including direct or indirect, short-term or long-term costs?

SPR will incur one-time, pro-rata real estate closing costs; however, per the terms of the Maintenance and Operations Agreement between SPR and Historic Seattle PDA, Historic Seattle PDA will be responsible for all future maintenance, capital improvements, insurance, and operating costs.

Is there financial cost or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation?

Since Historic Seattle PDA utilized its existing line of credit to purchase the property in Q4 2021, if the City does not acquire the easement, Historic Seattle PDA will default on its line of credit and will be forced to sell the property. A sale of the property would eliminate the opportunity for the City of Seattle to provide much needed, and now community expected, publicly accessible open space in the Beacon Hill neighborhood.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- a. Does this legislation affect any departments besides the originating department?
No.
- b. Is a public hearing required for this legislation?
No.
- c. Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle Times* required for this legislation?
No.
- d. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?
Yes, see Summary Exhibit A – Site Map
- e. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative. Does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? What is the Language Access plan for any communications to the public?
This legislation will provide a park site, without any future City of Seattle expense and/or subsidy, that will benefit an underserved community. The park site will also be used to

complement and support the community-focused operations of the Garden House. The entire property, including house and park, will be operated by Historic Seattle PDA.

f. Climate Change Implications

1. Emissions: Is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way?

This legislation will decrease carbon emissions in a material way. The National Trust for Historic Preservation highlights in a 2016 study, that “it takes between 10 and 80 years for a new building that is 30 percent more efficient than an average-performing existing building to overcome, through efficient operations, the negative climate change impacts related to the construction process.” In other words, when faced with the possibility of demolition of the Garden House, Carl Elefante, former President of the American Institute of Architects said, “The greenest building is one that already exists.”

2. Resiliency: Will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle’s resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.

This action will increase Seattle’s resiliency to climate change in a material way. In fact, the City’s purchase the Conservation and Recreation Easement will have a multiplier effect. The purchase of the Conservation and Recreation Easement to save the open space will help to sequester carbon and reduce heat island effects. The purchase is also critically important to Historic Seattle PDA as it saves and reuses the house, thereby eliminating approximately 540 cubic yards of construction debris from being generated and taken to the landfill.

g. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program’s desired goal(s)?

Historic Seattle PDA is executing its community engagement plan and is receiving feedback from the neighborhood on desired uses for the house and grounds. Through this community engagement process, Historic Seattle PDA will identify a tenant(s) to curate on-site programming. As stated by Historic Seattle PDA, the prospective tenant(s) must:

- demonstrate a history of curating community-focused activities,
- demonstrate an ability to pay rent,
- manage and maintain indoor and outdoor, community-focused space,
- provide access for a wide variety of community interests and uses, applying a lens of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

In other words, the City’s purchase of a Conservation and Recreation Easement will run with the property in perpetuity and that reduction of development pressure will empower and allow Historic Seattle PDA to work with community to develop and enjoy much needed open space, and a community-centered facility within a historically important structure, all without the need for any future financial commitment from the City.

List attachments/exhibits below:
Summary Exhibit A - Property Maps