

# Port of Olympia Billy Frank Jr. Waterfront Project

## Summary of Public Comments

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### Project Overview

In August 2017, the Port of Olympia received a petition to rename a portion of Marine Drive to “Billy Frank Jr. Boulevard,” in honor of the late leader and his impact within our community and far beyond. The Port’s response to these types of inquiries is laid out in Policy #1107, which calls for a Naming Review Team to consider a number of factors and solicit community feedback prior to forwarding a recommendation to the Port Commission for action.

As a first step in this effort, Port staff reached out to the Squaxin Island Tribe and members of the Frank family to discuss the proposal and their level of interest moving forward. At the conclusion of that meeting, the parties agreed to pursue an alternative proposal that might not only accomplish the intent of the original proposal, but more strongly align with Billy Frank Jr’s passions and messages.

In short, the alternative proposal would rename what is currently labeled the “East Bay” trail, running from the southern point of Marine Drive north to the Port-owned “North Point Park” located along the shores of Puget Sound, which previously served as the host location for two Native American Canoe Journeys (Squaxin, 2012 and Nisqually, 2016). Per the recommendation of the alternative proposal, this stretch would be renamed to “Billy Frank Jr. Trail and Park.”

The project team has also suggested several enhancements to the original petition, including:

- Installation of educational kiosks featuring information about, but not limited to:
  - The life, accomplishments and messages of Billy Frank Jr.
  - The history and culture of the Squaxin Island Tribe – People of the Water
  - The importance, life-cycle and role of salmon in our environmental and community health
- Installation of additional native plants and associated signage
- Additional enhancements and educational components as budget allows over time

The ultimate design and implementation plan would be coordinated through a partnership between the Port, Squaxin Island Tribe, Fran Family and potentially others. To view additional details and photos associated with proposed project, please see the Port’s PowerPoint presentation at <http://www.portolympia.com/DocumentCenter/View/3018>.

The Port hosted two open houses to present the original and alternative proposal, in partnership with the Squaxin Tribe and Frank family. A comment portal was also made available on the Port website and publicized through e-blast and social media. The public comment period concluded January 12. A summary of input follows.

Port staff will present these comments along with a summary of the alternative proposal at an Advisory Meeting Jan. 22. No action will be taken at the meeting, as the advisory is information only. The Port

Commission is scheduled to take formal action at its regular Commission Meeting Feb. 12. Commission meetings begin at 5:30 PM at the Port of Olympia Commission Chambers, 606 Columbia St., Olympia. Pending Commission approval of the recommendation, a preliminary Naming Ceremony and Blessing is tentatively scheduled for March 9, 2018, on Billy Frank Jr's birthday.

## **Public Feedback**

### Open Houses

*Open house feedback is presented in abbreviated summary form.*

#### **Thursday, January 4, 2018**

Olympia Center, Olympia – Approximately 25 attendees (not including Port staff and Commissioners)

- I like seeing the coordination between Port, Tribes and, hopefully, the City of Olympia. I encourage you to also consider promoting the fishery and underwater habitat in general.
- Maximize opportunities to recognize culture – perhaps install a simple pole or longhouse.
- This location is adjacent to the Cascade Pole clean-up site; I am concerned that children could be at-risk if they cross into fenced off areas.
- The most important thing we can do with educational is tie land, water and Billy Frank Jr.
- I appreciate learning from the Squaxin Tribe and Frank family.
- Let's put something fun down there, like a tire swing.
- Billy went to Washington HS, not Yelm HS. He also attended The Evergreen State College. Billy was also an expert witness in the 1993 "Shellfish Decision," where he shared the Creation Story. He also narrated a 2006 Emmy-nominated television series, which we hope to see re-started with his son Willy serving as narrator.
- I wonder if this project will help us secure funds to expedite contamination clean-up.
- If you pursue the longhouse idea, invite Evergreen students to participate given their expertise.
- I would like to see a Native American Cultural Center on or near the site, and/or a totem pole carving station observable by all for educational purposes.
- Thanks to the Squaxin Tribe for hosting us on their land, and making us feel welcome.
- Consider inviting Children's Museum designer to participate (for consistent look and feel).
- I really want to see this happen. Consider education related to Medicine Creek Treaty.
- The Squaxin operate two hatcheries – we put fish back in the water.
- Will there be water access as part of the project?

#### **Tuesday, January 9, 2018**

Lacey Conference Center – Approximately 15 attendees (not including Port staff and Commissioners)

- As Billy's niece, I am very excited to see this happen. It's good to honor Billy and our ancestors.
- As a friend of the family, I encourage you to tell the story of salmon, as Billy did.
- I have been a fishing boat captain and attended law school to fight for salmon and the environment. We have to protect salmon and honor our contract with Mother Earth.
- I was recently at Standing Rock. I encourage you to work with First Nations, and be a beacon for others.
- Keystone species are critically important as indicators to water and environmental health. It's the right thing to do to honor Billy's message right here on Puget Sound waters.

- I'm new here and want to learn how I can be an effective steward of this part of Turtle Island.
- I just transferred to The Evergreen State College after listening to my elders. I want to see larger salmon runs. It's good to honor Billy Frank Jr.

### Comments Submitted in Writing and/or through the Port's Online Portal

*Submitted comments are presented as-received online or entered on comment card*

- I strongly support the naming of the Park after Billy Frank Jr. I had the privilege of hearing Billy speak in support of salmon recovery and ecosystem protection. You should consider including the word Heritage in the tile, to associate with Tumwater's Heritage Park. Tumwater celebrates the heritage of developing Olympia, the industry the infrastructure. The East Bay area is a great opportunity to bridge the shared heritage that pioneers and Native Americans have. Indeed there is some negativity in that evolving relationship, but this is an opportunity to bridge that, Billy was about building bridges. Perhaps a high viewing platform as a sister tower at the West Bay Marina and high bridge to the Hands-on Museum are a part of the symbolism.
- Osiyo. I would like to thank the Port of Olympia, the Squaxin Island Tribe and the Frank Family for proposing this beautiful gift to our community. I'm Native, but a newly-arrived guest to these lands and waters my Nisqually and Squaxin cousins are responsible to. I'm heartened and inspired by this project, and urge the Commissioners to support it wholeheartedly. As Billy's son illuminated at the Port's public hearing last night, this initiative isn't simply about honoring a great warrior - this is even more deeply about creating a space where people can hear the land and water tell the vitally important stories Billy carried so well and told so powerfully: stories of the salmon, of how to be honorable inhabitants of this place, of the importance of each of us stepping up to do our part, of the beautiful imperative to restore the health of the water, of our Indigenous presence, past and future, of what it means to be sovereign, and of how we heal as a community. We all have so much work to do to help Olympia become the healing, thriving, greenly alive and just place we (both guests and caretakers) share a vision for. I believe that embodying Billy Frank Jr. in the park and trail, sharing what sustained and inspired him to greatness with everyone who visits, will be a powerful, necessary step on that path. Nvwadohiyada.
- This is a very important gesture and small reminder of what a great man did.
- Billy Frank Jr. was not only important to his tribal community directly but to Native Sovereignty in WA State as a whole. The "Fishing wars" in this state started a much larger movement in Washington Native Communities about Sovereignty as well as Native Identity as a whole. Before Fishing rights were honored it was difficult for Native people to fish as their ancestors did. This helped rebuild communities not only in physical means to feed themselves but to identify who we are as a people.
- I would like to see us honoring our native tribes in as many ways as we can.

### **Participants**

The following is an inventory of individuals who signed-in at one of the open houses or submitted their name on a comment card:

- Roger Bessey
- Deann Boyd

- Caroline Byrd
- Grace Ann Byrd
- Clydia Cuykendall
- Mark Dahley
- Joe Downing
- Suzanne Fell
- Peggen Frank
- Willie Frank
- Brian Frisina
- Ryan Harris
- Ryan Jeffries
- Colleen Jollie
- Nathaniel Jones
- Skip McConkey
- Bill McGregor
- Laurie Owen
- Ray Peters
- Maury Sanchez
- Julian Walters
- Kanim Wells
- Helen Wheatley
- E.J. Zita