City of Mukilteo

Shoreline Master Program

Historical Use of the Shoreline

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Photo by J. Bruce Arink
Historical Background

Parks and Open Space in the Past

Traditionally, Native Americans and settlers used the shoreline and uplands as part of their daily lives. Historically, formal parks were not seen as necessities for recreation. Figure E-1 depicts Native Americans and settlers using the waterfront. The long tradition of people using the shoreline of Mukilteo makes it one of the community’s most important natural and scenic assets. Native Americans fished and collected shellfish along local beaches. The spit forming Elliot Point was an excellent location to harvest salmon and shellfish seasonally.

**Figure B-1: Historic Use of Mukilteo Shoreline**

As settlers moved into the area, Elliot Point became a major deep-water port as seen below in historic photos (Figure B-2). Originally, a water view was the predominant form of open space. Beaches were readily accessible by boat along the northern portion of Mukilteo’s shoreline.

**Figure B-2: Historic Photos of Elliot Point**
In the late 1800s, developers who had never seen the land much less surveyed it – created ‘paper’ plats without regard to topography and natural features. This form of platting parceled all available land into lots and street right-of-ways, but did not dedicate space for public parks as seen in Figure E-3. One of the few open spaces, donated for community use under this system, was a cemetery in the older portion of town.

Figure B-3: Historic Aerial Photo Showing Streets and Lots

Early public lands in Mukilteo included the Rosehill School, which burned down March 17, 1928. In its place, a new school building was built by September 1928. This ‘newer’ Rosehill School Building now houses the City’s community center (seen in Figure B-4). A community hall was also built in the mid-1920s on land donated by the Crown Lumber Company, as the Royal Neighbor’s Lodge. This building, also known as Hawthorne Hall, is located at the east end of Second Street. It was dedicated to the City in 1957 and it currently houses the Boys and Girls Club.

Figure B-4: Historic Photo of Rosehill Site
In addition to the use of historic buildings and natural open spaces for leisure, private businesses also provided residents with recreational venues. Historical photographs of mill baseball teams show that companies sponsored outdoor recreation (Figure B-5). These local teams played on filled lands in the downtown area.

Figure B-5: Historic Photos of Mill Baseball Teams

Another community landmark, the Mukilteo State Park constructed in the 1950s, on a filled tideland, has provided continuous public beach access up to the present. Figure B-6 shows historic photos of the Lighthouse and adjacent shoreline.

Figure B-6: Historic Photos of Lighthouse and Adjacent Shoreline

Further south the subdivision of land comprising the mid-portion of Mukilteo annexed in 1984, north of 92nd Street and Big Gulch took place under Snohomish County regulations. During this phase, minimal parkland was set aside north of 92nd Street. Furthermore, ravines were not protected as separate parcels before the 1990s. However, the Mukilteo School District obtained large, flat upland parcels for schools, sport fields and playgrounds. Consequently to this day, school sites, especially Middle and High Schools, provide the majority of active outdoor and indoor recreational facilities for the community.

When the Harbour Pointe area began developing in the 1980s a number of open space parcels were delineated to protect the ravines. After this point, obtaining adequate open space seems to have become a stronger community goal.