



South Waterfront Neighborhood Park Project Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

February 26, 2008, 4:00 – 6:00 pm
Portland Building, 2nd Floor Room B, 1120 SW 5th

Attendance

Project Advisory Committee (PAC) members present

Brian Alfano, South Waterfront District business person (Umpqua Bank)
Sarah Bernhard, Williams and Dame Development
Ken Love, South Portland Neighborhood Association
Brian Newman, OHSU Planning and Development
Tom Noguchi, South Waterfront District resident
Kecia Welt, South Portland Neighborhood resident

PAC members absent

Lew Pusch, South Waterfront District resident

TAC members present

Kristin Calhoun, Regional Arts and Culture Council
Terri Davis, Portland Parks and Recreation Zone 2 Manager
Michelle Dewey, Portland Department of Transportation
David Elkin, Bureau of Environmental Services
Kara Fioravanti, Bureau of Development Services
Valerie Garrett, Office of Sustainable Development (sitting in for Alisa Kane)
Arun Jain, Bureau of Planning
Kurt Krueger, Portland Department of Transportation
Jody Yates, Portland Department of Transportation

TAC members absent

Michael Boyer, Portland Crime Prevention Program, Office of Neighborhood Involvement
Sue Donaldson, Portland Parks and Recreation Planner
Troy Doss, Bureau of Planning
Roger Geller, Portland Department of Transportation

Project team

Tim Anderson, Hargreaves Associates
Sandra Burtzos, PPR Project Manager
Leslie Chayer, PPR Event Assistant
Sarah Coates, PPR Project Assistant
Barbara Hart, PPR Public Involvement Coordinator
Elaine Kearney, Lango Hansen
Kurt Lango, Lango Hansen
Mary Margaret Jones, Hargreaves Associates
James Mast, PDC Project Manager
Lara Rose, Hargreaves Associates
Riley Whitcomb, PPR SDC Manager

Audience members present

Carol Mayer-Reed
Don McTaggart, Portland Parks and Recreation

Adam Payn
Alan Schmidt, Bureau of Environmental Services, Sustainable Stormwater Development

Welcome and Introductions

(Barbara Hart & Sandra Burtzos, PPR)

Facilitator Barbara Hart welcomed everyone to the third meeting of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC). PAC members, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members, Project Team and audience members introduced themselves.

January 22, 2007 Meeting Summary

Barbara asked for changes, additions or edits to the January 22 PAC meeting summary. No changes were suggested, and the meeting summary was approved by the PAC.

SDC/Open Space Funds

(Riley Whitcomb, PPR)

SDCs are one-time fees on new development to cover a portion of the cost of providing public infrastructure like parks, water and transportation. \$3.8 million in current and future SDCs have been committed by PPR to help reimburse PDC for development of the Greenway and acquisition of the Neighborhood Park. Of that, \$2 million in SDCs have been collected by PPR as of February 2008. A percentage of SDCs generated in a local area stay in that area for park acquisition and improvements, and a percentage are used City-wide for acquisition and improvements. Per the Development Agreement, North Macadam Investors is required to pay \$3 million in SDCs for park and open space development and acquisition. \$2 million of that is being set aside for Greenway, or Local Access development. The other \$1 million is set aside for City-wide park acquisition and development.

Contributions to the South Waterfront Public Open Space Fund are generated from granting developers height or floor area bonuses (currently \$8.70/square foot for each floor area square foot built above 250 feet height.) All funds generated by the South Waterfront District Public Open Space Fund (OSF) have been dedicated to help PDC offset the \$7 million cost of acquiring the Neighborhood Park. \$1 million has been collected through the OSF as of February 2008.

As new developments occur in the District and Central City area, more SDC funds will become available for use. PPR is also in the process of requesting an SDC methodology update, which would increase SDCs paid for new residential and commercial development. If the Park SDC Methodology proposal going before City Council on March 5 is approved, PPR hopes to use these funds to help with the acquisition of approximately 4 acres of park land and to help with the development of approximately 10 acres of park land/greenway in the future. The amount of SDC funds available in the future is dependent upon many factors, including actual population and employment growth, real estate trends, the percentage of affordable housing exemptions, existing park capacity, and the timing of SDC payments by developers.

SDC/Open Space Fund PAC Discussion

- Comment: The \$1 million from NMI should not go into City-wide park acquisition and development, when the Greenway project has a deficit. I hope the SDC or Open Space Fund can be diverted to go towards the Greenway.
- Q: When would the commercial component of SDCs go into effect, and when would funds be available? A: If approved by City Council, the rate increase would first be assessed at 50% starting January 2009, then moving to 100% in January 2010.

Hargreaves Presentation

(Tim Anderson, Mary Margaret Jones, and Lara Rose of Hargreaves Associates and Sarah Coates, PPR)

January 29th Open House Questionnaire Results Summary

Results show that people are looking to use the Neighborhood Park primarily for relaxing (88%), informal lunch/picnic/dining (75%), and art festivals/shows (73%). Just under half of respondents indicated an interest in informal sports that could be played on an open lawn. Fewer respondents indicated an interest in using the park for organized sports with designated sports areas. Of the organized sports, bocce ball scored highest, with 29% of respondents indicating an interest in having a formal bocce ball court in the Neighborhood Park.

Dog bag dispensers (61%) rated highest of the park amenities, followed by a water feature/interactive fountain (57%), night lighting (56%), colorful native plantings/gardens (55%), and an informal children's play area (53%). In a list of Neighborhood Park amenities, permanent restrooms rated fairly low (35%), but rated higher than no restrooms in the park (19%), or a curbside public restroom (16%).

A joint Neighborhood Park/Greenway question, asked in isolation, not in the context of prioritizing park elements, asked if the South Waterfront District needs a public restroom. The majority (80%) said "yes"; 20% said "no." Forty-six percent thought the restroom should be located in the Neighborhood Park, 26% chose the Greenway, and 28% thought it should be elsewhere in the District.

Questionnaire PAC Discussion

- Comment: The Greenway PAC is leaning towards not recommending a restroom in the Central District Greenway.
- Q: Were people asked to weigh restrooms against other programming elements in the questionnaire? A: No, the restroom question was an isolated question. As we move farther along in the design process, we will be asking people to prioritize program elements.

Conceptual Design Approach

The Neighborhood Park is not an isolated park, but should be considered in the context of existing and future surrounding parks. Within this context, the 2-acre Neighborhood Park should serve local residents and employees, and also the broader public. The park should be a multi-use, flexible space, and should be green but also designed for heavy use.

Site evaluation shows that the central area of the site is most comfortable during midday hours because it is generally sunny and protected from wind. Because of the primary pedestrian connections from the north, and the seating area outside of the Mirabella, the NE corner of the site will be ideal for use as an active/public space. The NW corner of the site is also highly visible by vehicular traffic coming into the district and could serve as an entrance or visual gateway into the park. Each of the following conceptual design alternatives responds to these observations.

Hargreaves Associates presented three conceptual design options, each with a different programmatic focus, as well as one hybrid option that brings elements from each of the three concepts together. Preliminary, "order-of-magnitude" cost estimates were produced for each concept with the assistance of a professional estimator. The construction budget is \$2.8 million, including construction costs and construction contingency.

Event-Oriented Concept

The Event Concept emphasizes Bond and Pennoyer as active streets, including space for farmers market or festival tents along Bond and a central plaza that serves as a continuation of Pennoyer (which has already been used for events). The central plaza could be activated by movable tables and chairs, an interactive fountain, and a rain shelter/ restroom structure/ art installation. The northern half of the park is designed as an evening performance space, an amphitheater with lawn and seat walls that could double

as casual seating space and a play hill throughout the day. The southern half of the park could be a more informal space that could host events at any time. A preliminary look at which elements of this concept could fit within the construction budget indicates that the fountain and restroom/art structure would need to be part of a future park vision and could not be afforded within the existing budget.

Community-Oriented Concept

The Community Concept focuses on creating a neighborhood-oriented park and addressing key pedestrian connections and adjacencies. Because a large number of people from the neighborhoods across I-5 will likely arrive in the District via the Gibbs St. Pedestrian Bridge and walk down Moody to the park, this concept creates a main entrance with views into the heart of the park at Moody and Curry. The concept includes a central lawn gathering space (which is slightly smaller than the gathering space in the events concept), and an active NE garden corner in front of the Mirabella that could include a bocce ball court, a customized play area, plantings, and seating areas for relaxing and having lunch. The remainder of the site could be a more naturalized landscape. Art could be integrated into the southern area of the park, which is a particularly appropriate location for a piece that responds to the wind or other environmental phenomena. A concept like this is affordable within the budget since it does not include extensive paving, a fountain or a restroom. Because this concept focuses on attracting neighborhood users and not on events that draw crowds from further afield, a public restroom wouldn't be that necessary.

Landscape-Oriented Concept

The Landscape Concept focuses on providing natural areas and habitat, and creates a place for people to take respite from the city. The concept is largely a wild, naturalized landscape that extends all the way to the street curbs, with native meadows or woodland planting framing a central open lawn and an environmental play area in the northern portion of the site. This concept could include art that draws on environmental phenomena, such as a grove of "mystical" trees (trees that make sounds by the wind moving through their leaves) and a stormwater collection system in the SW corner. A fountain is sited at the small plaza by the base of the lawn in this concept; the fountain could serve as a visual gateway to the park, an interactive play area, and could also aid in buffering the park from city noise. This concept does not include a restroom because a structure seems less appropriate in a landscape-oriented concept. All elements in this concept are affordable within the construction budget, although the fountain would need to be modest in size and design.

Hybrid Concept

The Hybrid Concept incorporates the strongest elements of each option described above. This concept includes a smaller market and festival edge along Bond, an active garden area that includes play, gardens, bocce, seating areas, and a restroom in the NE corner of the park, a central lawn gathering space that relates to the terminus of Pennoyer, a small interactive fountain area to the west of the lawn, and a naturalized landscape in the southern and western portions of the park. The naturalized landscape could extend to the curb so that paths bring people directly into the park. In the Hybrid Concept, the restroom/rain shelter and the fountain are not affordable within the existing budget, but would be part of a future vision for the park.

Public/TAC Discussion

- Comment: It is problematic to extend the park to the edge of the curb. PDOT has ADA and streetlight responsibilities for sidewalks in the District, requiring the sidewalks to be 12' wide for furnishings and a pedestrian thoroughway. A: There could be another layer of paths that serve as the pedestrian thoroughway inside the park, rather as an outer sidewalk.
- Comment: The North Park Blocks, which don't include sidewalks, are not successful because you end up with a muddy strip along the edge of the park where people need to walk.
- Q: Are there any cost figures for the Old Town Prototype restroom? A: Not yet.
- Q: Who would maintain a public restroom in the right-of-way? A: PPR.
- Comment: Building a public restroom in the District could be an opportunity to partner with area developers.

- Comment: The drawings look beautiful in birds-eye view, but they don't include a sense of the third dimension. Using existing soil on the site to create depressions and mounds would be a nice feature. A: Hargreaves will develop the three-dimensional aspects of the park as the design progresses. There may be high water table and flooding issues that would make the creation of depressions into the site undesirable.
- Comment: The Event Concept includes a hillside at the northwest corner of the site, which blocks the desired pedestrian entrance. A: Because that corner also has high vehicular traffic, Hargreaves wanted to look at one option that creates a sense of enclosure at this location. The back of the hillside could be planted in an interesting way so that it is a strong visual feature.
- Comment: Each of the four concepts focuses towards the existing development, but there aren't connecting pathways towards future developments.
- Comment: Stormwater from adjacent new buildings could be possible to treat on the park site. Is the water currently draining to the SW corner, where you show the stormwater treatment? A: The site currently slopes gradually at approximately ½% over the site, from north to south. We'd likely need to incorporate some additional topography to treat stormwater in the SW corner.
- Comment: I love the idea of including a restroom in the OHSU parking garage and keeping a building out of the park. If you do need to have one in the park, I don't think the corner facing the Mirabella's café is the best place.
- Comment: There may be opportunities to pick up Pennoyer's tributary stormwater theme and continue that theme into the Park. The Design Commission is looking at these accessways as fingers of green. If you feel it's important to have a terminus at Pennoyer, that space could be designed as a foil for the parking garage. In the Event Concept, it would be nice if there is a loop people can take to walk through the park. Native meadows look bad for 3-4 months in this climate, and may also be too passive for an urban park. A lot of pumped groundwater comes out of the foundations of buildings in the District; there may be an opportunity to use the water from the future OHSU garage for a stormwater system in the park. Mayer Reed has some displays of landscape development in the District that could be helpful.
- Comment: "Fingers of green" is a very important concept in the District.

PAC Discussion

Three PAC members indicated preferences for the Community and Hybrid Concepts. Their reasons included the public nature of those concepts, the fact that these options provide multi-functional community gathering spaces, and a preference for the NE corner being a more urban area with plantings, gardens, and a variety of seating areas. PAC members noted that the Landscape Concept has possible security and maintenance issues, and the native meadow takes too much out of the usable area of the Park, especially since the Greenway offers a lot of habitat. One PAC member noted it was important to provide a combination of sunny and shady places to sit on the lawn, and expressed a preference for a stormwater feature over a fountain in all schemes. PAC members also expressed an interest in having the playground offer unique, informal or environmental play (as opposed to traditional playground equipment).

Play Structure

- Q: Why does the play area in the Community concept cost \$70,000, while a play area in the Hybrid Concept costs \$40,000? A: The Community concept could include a more formal or extensive play area than the Hybrid concept. The water feature in the Hybrid Concept would also be used for play.
- Comment: The play structure should be unique and innovative. Skinner's Butte Waterfront Park in Eugene, Oregon has a river rock play structure, and it's a fun and interesting place.
- Comment: There are not many children in the District. If the park has a particular draw, like a fountain, people may bring children to the area. The lawn area should be sculpted so that kids could roll on it or use it as an amphitheatre.
- Comment: Art should be functional in a park, and think an artistic play structure is a good idea.

Events

- Comment: There are already events in the District that are using, and could continue to use, the park site, but it's not necessary to have a formal event space like the one in the Event Concept. If there are market or festival booths along Bond, that are should be designed carefully so that people do not spill out onto the street.
- Comment: Accommodating events is a good idea. If you could have temporary power and restrooms when you have events, you might not need permanent power or restrooms.

Restroom

- Brian Newman was asked to report on OHSU's planning for development on Block 33 and whether a public restroom could be included in the project. OHSU is willing to discuss with the City the possibility of a city-owned restroom being included in the project. The construction cost of the restroom and ongoing maintenance cost will likely need to be covered by the City. Also, the construction of the parking garage on Block 33 is several years out, and we will not know if a restroom can be included in the project until well after the final decisions are made on the neighborhood park design and budget. Nonetheless, OHSU is willing to discuss the possibility of a city restroom in the project.
- Q: How far out is the Block 33 development? A: The earliest would be 5 years, but the exact timing is unknown at this time.
- Comment: It's important to have a restroom in the Neighborhood Park, especially if the Block 33 OHSU building is farther out in the future and Umpqua isn't always open.
- Comment: Umpqua is currently the only public restroom in the District, and does not anticipate having a problem with public restrooms before 5+ years. We shouldn't miss opportunities to make a great park because of the expense of having to providing a restroom. There could be other opportunities to provide public restrooms in the District in the future. No one would want a restroom as a focal point in the Neighborhood Park.
- Q: Would PPR provide porta-potties if there were events? A: Whoever rents the park is responsible for furnishing porta-potties. For larger events, they would need to bring in additional porta-potties to supplement a permanent structure if we had one.
- Comment: If a restroom is removed from the Event Concept, art should be incorporated elsewhere in the park design.
- Comment: Creative solutions for the public restroom are important to avoid having a restroom in the park.

Budget

- Q: When did the \$2.8 million for construction become \$2.5 million? A: The estimated total amount to be spent on construction is \$2.8 million. However, the \$2.8 million includes a 10% construction contingency, which is typical for all construction projects, therefore resulting in a \$2.5 million bid price target. The contingency will eventually be used for park construction, but to help keep the project costs from going over budget, we reserve a contingency.
- Q: Did a cost estimator put the cost estimates together? A: The Hargreaves team put these initial cost estimates together, with assistance from their local cost estimating consultant.
- Q: How much soil will PPR move from the Gabriel Park Skatepark development? A: Unknown.
- Comment: Why does the Neighborhood Park project have to pay for the streets/streetlights? There's an opportunity for more partnerships to pay for particular features. Initial development should at least provide infrastructure for a water feature.

Vendors

- Q: Is the thought of having a café in the park completely gone? A: With all the surrounding retail, it doesn't seem to be that critical. Having a café would be a fairly large facility for a park this size.
- Q: Could vendors be allowed in this park? A: Vendor carts are permitted in certain parks. If there is a desire for it, there's a possibility they could be permitted in the Neighborhood Park. The vending carts allowed are free-standing, and self-contained.

Seating

- Q: Who would put movable chairs/tables away at night? A: The District would need to coordinate that. Hoyt Street Properties is responsible for the movable chairs at Jamison Square. At South Park Block 5, the café will include, and be responsible for, movable chairs and tables.

Next Steps

The second project Open House, intended to gather public input on the four conceptual design options, will be held March 11, 2008 at the OHSU Center for Health and Healing, 3rd Floor, Paul Kirk Conference Center Rooms 1A/1B from 5:30-8:00 PM. The presentation is at 6:00. Hargreaves will use this input to begin working on a preferred design.

The next PAC meeting for this project is scheduled for April 1, 4-6 PM at the Portland Building, 2nd Floor Room B, 1120 SW 5th.

