



City of Bellevue

Meydenbauer Bay: Park and Land Use Plan

Steering Committee Meeting #10

MEETING SUMMARY

DATE: May 29, 2008

TIME: 5:00 PM

LOCATION: Bellevue City Hall

ATTENDEES:

Steering Committee

Doug Leigh
Iris Tocher
Kevin Paulich
Bob MacMillan
Hal Ferris
Merle Keeney
Stefanie Beighle
Betina Finley
Rich Wagner
David Schooler
Marcelle Lynde

City Staff and Consultants

Robin Cole, City of Bellevue
Mike Bergstrom, City of Bellevue
Patrick Foran, City of Bellevue
Shelley Marelli, City of Bellevue
Dan Stroh, City of Bellevue
Glenn Kost, City of Bellevue
David Blau, EDAW
Marilee Stander, EDAW
Brian Scott, EDAW

SUMMARY:

1. Welcome and review of the agenda

Doug Leigh, Steering Committee co-chair, opened the eleventh meeting of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan Steering Committee. He reviewed the meeting agenda and asked those in the audience to sign-in and indicate whether they wished to provide comments at the end of the meeting. Doug also informed the committee that Al Yuen had resigned from the committee. Mike Bergstrom, Planning and Community Development Project Manager, confirmed that Al Yuen had resigned and noted that the vacant position would hopefully be filled by someone on the Bellevue Transportation Commission. Mike stated that Stu Vander Hoek would be absent at this meeting.

2. Review and approval of January 17, 2008 Meeting Summary

Doug asked if the Steering Committee members would like to make changes to the summary from the January 17th Steering Committee Meeting. No changes were requested and the meeting summary was approved.

3. Summary of Project to date

Mike Bergstrom gave an overview of the project history beginning with the City's purchase of the land in 1993 for the purpose of creating a public waterfront that is both physically and visibly

accessible to downtown Bellevue. Over the years, the City has acquired approximately 10 acres and almost a quarter-mile of shoreline along Lake Washington's Meydenbauer Bay. Mike went on to describe the official City process for planning the waterfront which began in 2007 with the creation and adoption of a set of planning principles and the appointment of a steering committee. In January 2008, the steering committee reached consensus on a preliminary land use concept. Moving forward the City would like to accomplish two primary objectives; to create a master plan for the park and to provide connections between the downtown and the waterfront. Mike mentioned that city staff and the steering committee will continue to track unresolved items from the previous phase of work and should focus on finding resolution to those items as the group moves forward with the process. Mike reviewed the on-going issues as they related to three geographic areas including the upper block, south of main, and the park.

4. Moving Forward

a. Introduction of EDAW, Inc.

Robin Cole, Parks & Community Services Project Manager, gave a brief introduction to the current phase of the project, the park master planning phase and integration of the upland and lowland parcels. She emphasized that the City wanted to ensure project success and identified one key factor as an indicator of success; environmental stewardship. Given the opportunity to start again with a new consultant team on the park master planning phase, the City had the opportunity to seek a consultant team that is qualified in both park design and environmental management. The City selected EDAW Inc., the team that placed second in the original interview process, to complete the next phase of work. Robin gave a brief introduction of EDAW Inc. and the team members that were present, including EDAW's project principal David Blau, project manager Marilee Stander and community outreach specialist Brian Scott.

b. Roles & responsibilities

Brian Scott, EDAW's community outreach specialist, introduced himself and noted some of his significant local project experience including recent work with the City of Seattle on the contentious Viaduct project. Brian then reviewed a handout that was distributed to all meeting attendees on roles and responsibilities. He described the roles of city council, the city staff, the steering committee, the public and the consultant team on the project. He then reviewed the Steering Committee Charge and went on to describe a list of meeting management guidelines and steering committee expectations, setting the groundwork for this and future meetings.

c. Park planning approach

David Blau, EDAW's project principal, presented a slideshow introducing EDAW's qualifications and previous project experience. He began with a series of slides that EDAW developed with the City of Bellevue in 2003 during an early visioning process for Meydenbauer Bay Park, illustrating EDAW's prior project experience. During the early visioning work with the city, the team had discussed things such as the land/water edge, hard vs. softscape, transitioning the grade change, environmental stewardship, and connections - land use, visual, & physical. Moving forward with the project today, David described how EDAW will focus on creating a significant park as defined by the steering committee and the city. He repeated a quote from Merle Keeney, we want to "once again be inspired to think big and bold...to look outside the box and envision the ultimate experience for all Bellevue residents."

After briefly reviewing the history of EDAW, and their four founding partners, David described EDAW staff expertise in science and design noting that team members look for the "Fusion Zone"; designs that provide for people's use and enjoyment while respecting the ecological health of natural systems. David went on to describe a number of projects that EDAW completed over the past several years including park planning projects that

were informed by science and art, successful waterfront restoration and recreation projects as well as significant public waterfront parks both local and global.

d. Schedule/process

Marilee Stander, EDAW's project manager, presented the team organizational chart describing that the team is structured into three major groups including the leadership team, task leaders, and technical specialists. She noted that the three major project task areas, land use and park master planning, public outreach, and environmental science would be led by EDAW staff with numerous years of expertise in each discipline area. She went on to note that the EDAW team is supported by strong specialists in the areas of marina development and management, civil engineering, traffic and circulation, and cultural resources.

After reviewing the team organizational chart, Marilee presented the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan process diagram. She noted that the process diagram was developed to illustrate the integration of the public process and consultant tasks. She described that the diagram is divided into three major horizontal bars. The first bar contains information about the project public outreach program including potential meeting dates for steering committee meetings and public workshops. The bottom two bars contain information about consultant task milestones for planning and environmental analysis work. The graphics within each horizontal bar depict work products that will be delivered at the end of each major task milestone.

- Hal Ferris asked if the consultant team thought that one meeting provided enough time for the steering committee to discuss program options as shown on the process diagram. He said that he was concerned that schedule would not allow enough time to develop these options.
- Marilee Stander answered that the process had been designed to provide time for the steering committee to give feedback to graphic options/alternatives, noting that it is often difficult to discuss abstract park program ideas without showing some spatial relationships and relative intensity of use.
- Brian Scott answered that the meeting discussion plan could be adjusted later and should be evaluated at the end of the night's meeting.
- Rich Wagner asked staff to provide a copy of the team organization chart; and Mike agreed to see that it was sent to committee members.

e. Outreach plan

Brian Scott presented information about the outreach plan. In addition to the meetings that Marilee described in her review of the process diagram, the outreach plan includes developing an enhanced public website, and an outreach toolkit containing press releases, PowerPoint presentations, and project FAQs for each of the major project phases.

- Hal Ferris noted that he was still concerned that it was too early for program discussions.
- Marcelle Lynde indicated that she thought it appeared that the primary source of public outreach was a few meetings and wanted to encourage broader communication.
- David Schooler commented that he agreed with Hal's previous comment.
- Brian Scott suggested that the group evaluate the need for additional program discussion at the end of the night's meeting.
- Robin Cole added that she wanted the steering committee to know that future program discussions would not be limited to this evening's meeting and that the process would be iterative. The hope is that the alternatives will help inform and guide program discussions. The alternatives will continue to be refined as program options are revealed and consensus is formed.

5. Park Program Options

Brian Scott introduced the fifth agenda item with a review of the project Planning Principles. He described that he would use a large wall graphic to document the steering committee members' discussion. The wall graphic contained a summary list of the twelve planning principles. The team's objective for the discussion was to begin to get feedback from the steering committee on project priorities that could frame the park program discussions around one cohesive vision. The information gathered during this discussion would be used to develop preliminary alternatives during the first public workshop, planned for the last week in July. Brian opened the discussion with a question to the committee. He asked the group to comment on the Planning Principles and to discuss which if any rose to the top as priority issues.

- Merle Keeney initiated the discussion by stating that he felt the park should provide a "remarkable and memorable experience".
- Doug Leigh stated that he felt that environmental stewardship and history should be a priority.
- Iris Tocher mentioned that she liked David's presentation. She noted that she believes that quality design and environmental stewardship should be a priority and agreed that the program will be born out of the vision.
- David Blau added that the program for Toulumne River Park was developed only after the public and committee came to a consensus that all program items should be waterfront related uses.
- Bob MacMillan indicated that one should be able to detach themselves from the hustle and bustle of downtown. People of Bellevue should be able to have a Zen like experience close to the city. He noted that he thought environmental stewardship, pedestrian priority, and remarkable and memorable shoreline experience should be at the top of the list.
- David Schooler said that he felt that remarkable and memorable shoreline experience is the most important principle, closely followed by pedestrian priority and environmental stewardship. He mentioned that there should be a way to treat the Bay water and create a real visual amenity. He also noted that the fourth priority principle in his mind is history. If we address all of these, we will get a strong design.
- Rick Wagner said that we don't want to duplicate what we have downtown; we should preserve the natural and the serene.
- Hal Ferris said that he thought this should be a place where people really want to go and come back again. He thought that the park experience should draw people in and should provide different experiences. He thought that the park should allow for changes to maintain interest and would be used by all the people in Bellevue if designed right.
- Doug Leigh indicated that a remarkable and memorable experience can be different things to different people and encouraged the group to discuss what that meant to them.
- Bob MacMillan noted the importance of connection and access, and the need to be pedestrian-friendly.
- Stefanie Beighle highlighted environmental stewardship as a top priority. She also noted that she thought that planning should not be targeted toward certain age groups at the exclusion of others. In particular, she wanted to be sure to plan for teenagers who are often left out of planning discussions. For example, we should consider authentic waterfront uses such as fishing for teens.
- Marcelle Lynde mentioned that it would be good to have a beach and a place to stick your feet in the water and to be able to interact with the Bay. She also said that she agreed with Stefanie's previous comment regarding planning for teens.
- Kevin Paulich said that a remarkable and memorable experience to him was nature in the city. He mentioned the Bald Eagle and the importance of maintaining their's and other wildlife habitat.
- Betina Finley said that access and connections from the upland park and finding something to bring one down into the park was a priority. She also thought that remarkable and memorable could be defined as a varied experience, and that the sites topography helps to define areas for different uses. She also stated we should be thinking about access to the park from the water, and she wants to see the park get built.

- Iris Tocher said that you can do stunning and artful things such as the curving light standards shown in David's presentation that can add to the memorable experience.
- Betina Finley mentioned that she thought History and Art should be a priority.
- Doug Leigh suggested that history can also mean environmental history.
- Iris Tocher noted that historical acknowledgements can be naturally inserted.
- Kevin Paulich added that he didn't expect to see a museum in the park. He said that history should be respected and highlighted but interpreted in a subtle and integrated way.
- Betina Finley noted the whale sculptures at the Seattle Center fountain as an example of artful acknowledgement of history.
- Rich Wagner mentioned that economic vitality has been a difficult point to grasp. He believes that a great park itself would support the downtown area.
- Bob MacMillan suggested that if done right, the park could be an economic driver for the whole city.
- Marcelle Lynde said that she thinks Vancouver, BC is a vibrant urban area but also calm and serene creating a memorable experience due to the contrast.
- Hal Ferris noted that there can be a range of experiences in the park; you can have vibrant and urban in some areas and calm and serene in others. We should think about the larger context – Downtown Park, Wildwood Park, Old Bellevue, pedestrian connections, etc.
- David Schooler added that structures and buildings don't equate to a "remarkable experience".
- Merle Keeney point out that this park isn't just for downtown. We need a water experience for all of Bellevue. He cautioned that we not lose site of the needs of those who did not respond to the survey.

Brian Scott asked the steering committee to try to describe what the park will look like on a bright sunny day in July.

- Marcelle Lynde said that there would be a lot of people in the park
- Kevin Paulich said that he found it remarkable to have diversity and a third place for the community to gather.
- Doug Leigh suggested that urban meant ease of access. He believes that the park will likely be "fluid" vs. "static".

Brian Scott suggested that the group revisit Hal's early comments regarding discussion time for program options. He asked if the group feels it is necessary to fix a program before moving forward with park alternatives.

- Hal Ferris said that his concern is that there are some areas that are not in agreement for program options. For example, he said that given the small size of the park and the narrowness of the bay, how is it possible to have places that are active and some that are quiet. He also suggested that the team focus on how the park can be used year round, not just in the sunny months.

Brian Scott ended the discussion with a review of the major consensus points as documented on the large wall graphic. He said that there was a lot of priority around environmental stewardship and creating a remarkable and memorable shoreline experience.

6. Public Comment

Doug Leigh then invited the public audience members to provide comment.

Tim Newkirk: Tim lives in Bayvue Village. He asked that when the City is noticing Meydenbauer Bay meetings in the future, they should be sure to notify all people who will be directly impacted by the project including everyone who live in the Bayvue Village. He said that from what he could see from the proposed plans, the Bay View has been singled out for redevelopment. His concern is that the affordable housing that Bayvue Village provides will be displaced with high-end hotels.

Betty Schwind: Betty would like to see something done about cleaning out the Bay. As someone who is interested in bird-watching, she is concerned about the impacts that the park might have on the birds that are currently found in the area. She mentioned that she is concerned that the

proposed street closure will seriously limit access and lock in the people who live in the area. She doesn't want to see a parking garage located in this area due to traffic concerns.

Anita Skoog Neil: Anita agreed with Doug's comment; everyone in the neighborhood who will be directly impacted should be sent notice of the meetings. Anita believes that developing a park program is essential in moving the process forward. She doesn't think that the group can begin addressing concerns until the options are developed.

Pamela Ebsworth: Pamela lives next to the park site. She noted that there are other waterfront parks in Bellevue and wanted to remind the group that Meydenbauer Bay Park only has ¼ mile of shoreline and that it isn't a large park. She stated that one of four salmon spawning streams is in the project area. She observed that there are few places in the US that have an amazing natural environment in such close proximity to a large urban area. She thought that should be preserved. She also noted that many of the best parks in large urban areas such as Central Park and many in Europe don't have a lot of parking.

Carl Vander Hoek: Carl commented on the discussion regarding prioritizing the planning principles. He said that History and Economic Vitality should be top priorities. Carl hopes that the City will consider a foot ferry that provides increased access to the park from multiple places around Lake Washington. Carl also observed that there are very few gas stations in this part of Bellevue and in the Downtown in general. He suggested that the gas station should remain because of this.

Ellie Austin: Ellie is interested in providing a rowing facility in the park and believes that this type of facility aligns very well with previously stated goals. It provides a healthy activity for teens, is relatively quiet and is a waterfront appropriate use.

Eileen Shulte: Eileen would prefer to see the more urban and intense park activities closer to downtown. She believes that a remarkable shoreline experience is a quiet one and while she does find children's laughter and talking to be appropriate waterfront noise, she would not like to hear other loud noises that might be associated with the park magnified along the waterfront.

David Keyser: Noting the traffic situation along Lake Washington Blvd in Kirkland, David suggested that people need to get off of busy streets and onto the grass.

7. Adjourn

The meeting was then adjourned. Robin noted that the next Steering Committee meeting would be held in July, immediately following the public workshop.

PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS (who signed in):

- Doug McCaughy
- David True
- Bob Dilg
- Tim Newkirk
- Betty Schwind
- Anita Skoog Neil
- Susan Rynas
- C. Scott East
- Ed Sweo
- Mark Williams
- Fakhry Tirhi
- Dave Keyser
- Negar Partovi
- Pamela Ebsworth
- Rod Bindon
- Scott Hannah
- Aaron Dichter
- Ray Waldmann
- Linda Osborn
- Eileen Shulte

- Pete Marshall
- Ron Kinoshita
- Michel Suignard
- Ellie Austin
- Leonard Schwind
- Linda Cyra Korsgaard
- Ed and Rae Mathewson
- Carl Vander Hoek
- Greg Itkin
- Robin and Blue Savage
- Al Mackenzie
- Tom Diller