



City of Bellevue

Meydenbauer Bay: Park and Land Use Plan

Steering Committee Meeting #6

MEETING SUMMARY

DATE: September 20, 2007

TIME: 5:00 PM

LOCATION: Bellevue City Hall, Room IE-108

ATTENDEES:

Steering Committee

Iris Tocher
Stu Vander Hoek
Kevin Paulich
Bob MacMillan
Stefanie Beighle
Al Yuen
Betina Finley
Marcelle Lynde
Rich Wagner
David Schooler

City Staff and Consultants

Robin Cole, City of Bellevue
Mike Bergstrom, City of Bellevue
Owen Lang, Sasaki
Jim Jacobs, Sasaki
Marcia Wagoner, PRR
Kirsten Hauge, PRR
Patrick Foran, City of Bellevue
Matt Terry, City of Bellevue
Shelley Marelli, City of Bellevue
Dan Stroh, City of Bellevue
Glenn Kost, City of Bellevue
Paul Inghram, City of Bellevue

SUMMARY:

I. Welcome and review of the agenda

Iris Tocher, Steering Committee co-chair, opened the sixth meeting of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan Steering Committee. She welcomed public audience members and noted that the purpose of the meeting was to serve as a working session focused on the park and land use alternatives. Since the focus was on the alternatives, during the meeting the public was encouraged to write their questions down and review them with staff at the upcoming open house on Tuesday, September 25 at City Hall. Although time was still dedicated for public comment on the meeting agenda, the open house was another opportunity to provide comments. People could also write comments and mail in their comment sheets. For those who wished to provide verbal

comment at the meeting, Iris asked them to sign up and they would be called to speak in the order listed.

Mike Bergstrom, Planning and Community Development Project Manager, discussed additional materials provided to the committee. There was an errata sheet with some corrections to the Frequently Asked Questions sheet. At the entry table, there were also additional copies available of the committee meeting packet. Typically the meeting agenda and respective handouts were posted to the web two days prior to each meeting.

II. Review and approval of August 16, 2007 Meeting Summary

Iris asked if Steering Committee members had any changes to the summary from the August 16th Steering Committee meeting. No changes were requested and the summary was approved.

III. Reports

a. August 16, 2007 Meeting Follow-up

At the August 16, Steering Committee, staff was asked to provide answers to questions raised during public comment. Mike indicated that those questions were answered in a letter that was sent to everyone who signed in at the August 16th meeting, and in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the project that were updated to include answers to the questions, and posted on the web page.

b. Staff updates

Mike indicated that the meeting packet included reports with information about outreach and activities after the August Steering Committee meeting.

IV. Discussion of alternatives

Mike Bergstrom noted that the purpose of the meeting was to allow the committee to see how their ideas have been visually presented in the early conceptual alternatives. The meeting was an opportunity for the committee and the public to get a better understanding of the potential options. Following the open house, Mike said the committee will come back to meet and discuss the alternatives again with the benefit of the additional public feedback from the open house. Jim Jacobs, Sasaki, reiterated that the goal of the meeting was to review the alternatives, so the project team can begin to receive some feedback. Each alternative does not represent a final decision, but rather an assembly of choices. The alternatives look at elements such as vehicle circulation, open space and parking in different compositions. Each address the same set of problems using a similar kit of parts. Jim hoped to describe the potential trade-offs and then follow with an opportunity for the committee to ask any clarifying questions, and a round robin to hear initial observations.

Before the alternatives were presented, Owen Lang, Sasaki, reviewed the project process diagram. Owen explained that the team collected data and looked at opportunities and constraints that fed into the planning framework. The process includes working with the Steering Committee and looking at land use, circulation and parking and other evaluation considerations. The

iterative process between the committee and staff will lead toward some direction from the committee. The committee's direction will then help City staff develop policies and amendments to guide the planning of the area. After arriving at consensus on a preferred plan, the City will focus on how to implement the vision. After December, the focus will be on the park master plan. The master planning is not a linear process and Owen noted that the heartfelt concerns of the public are embedded in the thinking of the committee and the project team.

Jim then reviewed the project schedule and key decision points. Although he recognized that the committee reviewed opportunities and constraints at a previous meeting, he reminded them of the key challenges such as topography issues. Opportunities include major nodes like Bellevue Way and Main Street, as well as Main Street and 100th and a neighborhood node like Lake Washington at 99th. As far as circulation, different circulation modes would ideally loop from Downtown Park to the water. Opportunities for waterfront use include different ways to handle stormwater management; perhaps day lighting stormwater to clean it up before it enters the bay. The potential for water views exists at Downtown Park and First Avenue. Parking is always an issue. Solutions may include potential satellite parking or underground parking at Downtown Park. Jim added that it may also be the time to form a public/private development relationship to make better use of parking or walkways.

At a later point, the team developed framework ideas that showcase attitudes toward open space. The ravine has a passive use of space that changes to more active use as it moves toward the waterfront. In regard to vehicle circulation, they looked at preserving existing downtown circulation patterns, with changing use of roads such as 99th, 100th and Meydenbauer Place. Changes could include modifying the roadways to more of a driveway experience and signaling 99th and Lake Washington Boulevard to allow ease of pedestrian circulation.

Jim introduced the currently maximum allowable development area. Building heights step down as the area moves toward the neighborhoods to the west. Most of the parcels in the uplands blocks are allowed to build up to 40 feet with a 35 percent lot coverage limit, but along the water, a 200 ft shoreline zone requires a 35 ft height limit.

Jim then reviewed the common elements for each alternative and asked the committee members to keep the following planning considerations in mind when reviewing the alternatives: land use, open space, pedestrian access and circulation. Next, Jim presented key features of each alternative.

Alternative #1

For Alternative 1, park patrons would enter along the ravine and continue down the ravine much like today. The upper parking would remain. The overlying concept for Alternative 1 is to maximize the space the City owns as traditional park space. The existing restroom and play area are maintained, but perhaps the beach is expanded. New lawn seating offers views to the bay and a place of informal gathering. A natural shoreline borders the park along the water and above the water a sloping hillside includes some stone terraces, and a scattering of picnic and gathering areas. Below 99th, the roadway becomes more of a driveway experience that narrows and still

provides access to Whaler's Cove and the marina. A boardwalk along the water leads to a new public pier over the water. Behind the pier is a grand procession of terraces from 100th that could include a community building. The Chevron site could be converted to a hotel, restaurant or plaza in order to activate additional public space.

From the terrace, a potential connection could lead to Meydenbauer Way and Wildwood Park. At Main Street and 100th, enhanced intersections help connect downtown to the water. Streetscape improvements also help to set up pedestrian corridors and a pedestrian pathway connects the Meydenbauer, Wildwood and Downtown parks. Underground parking is provided at the southwest corner of Downtown Park. In order to access water views, a viewing tower at the corner of Downtown Park gives a sense of way-finding. It would rise approximately 55 ft to get above the tree line.

Jim asked the committee to consider how to prioritize trade-offs. For instance, if they would be willing to trade building height or provide more lot coverage to enhance pedestrian access. If the City neglected the opportunity to look at the site as a whole right now, they would have to wait for each parcel to redevelop on an individual basis in order to achieve pedestrian access through to the water. The committee needs to weigh if providing pedestrian access through the mid-block is important.

Alternative #2

The big idea for Alternative 2 is to create a passive, garden setting. As an example, Jim asked the committee to consider the rose garden above the hill in Portland. Along the ravine, the driveway and parking are eliminated and people would walk down the ravine along a restored stream. The restroom is moved and the beach is slightly moved away from the stream. The hillside then becomes more of a garden experience. As the pedestrian boardwalk continues toward the Whaling building it swings toward the water. Picnic and gathering places are located by the Whaling building and boardwalk as well. The marina is reconfigured to form hooks on the other end of the public pier. Meydenbauer Way becomes more of a driveway experience that serves the yacht club, Imperial/The Vue Condos and offers some limited parking. A new turn around and park overlook could be similar to the Coit Tower in San Francisco and create an inviting entry.

In regard to development, Alternative 2 presents the idea to promote four parcels ripe for future redevelopment as one parcel. With one use of all parcels it becomes easier to get public access. Perhaps it could include a boutique hotel or a smaller scale building that fits in with the neighborhood. Parking stays underground in the Downtown Park to the east. Along Lake Washington Boulevard, there is a new vista point and a small 20 car parking lot. Overall, surface parking is limited to the bare minimum.

Alternative #3

Starting from the ravine, parking and the existing access is maintained. The park has a more formal character and expression in the landscape. The site includes potential reuse of two homes along Lake Washington Boulevard and provides access to the waterfront along a sloping

pathway. The pier frames the beach and the shoreline is more defined with a promenade. To the east, the downhill side of 99th provides pedestrian access and the play area activates at the terminus of the walkway. The end of 99th also includes a public pier. Use of the Whaling building may include canoe rental. In this scheme, the marina is reconfigured toward the yacht club, with day use along the promenade. The promenade then continues along to Meydenbauer Place. The sloping park hillside includes terraces and uses the idea of water to connect Downtown Park to the waterfront, with open water that courses and stair-steps down the hillside. The hillside is primarily a pedestrian experience, with a small building for concessions or restrooms. Potentially the city may sell rights to an adjoining parcel to get better public access.

Another question Jim posed to the committee is whether to provide underground parking at Wildwood Park. Underground parking could allow access to a grass-lined garage rooftop in Wildwood and great views to the bay. The primary concentration of this scheme is at the entry at 100th and Main Street. The other entry points are more neighborhood oriented. Downtown Park includes underground parking at the corner.

Jim then asked the committee if they had any questions of clarification before providing comments and feedback.

Comments/Questions:

- Betina Finley asked if Alternative 3 shuts down 100th to vehicular traffic north of Main. *No, but perhaps it is reduced to one lane.*
- Betina asked if the water element in the street would create a safety issue for vehicles. *We could raise the water element so it is out of the pathway of vehicles.*
- Rich Wagner asked to explain the thinking on the rationale for selling the shoebox parcel. *The idea is to allow the City more flexibility with additional pedestrian access and activation on the terraces.*
- Bob MacMillan said if you walk around the perimeter of the Chevron and visualize it without any buildings, the views could be spectacular. He noted that Bellevue has its own version of Lombard Street at Meydenbauer Place. The topography creates a similar opportunity.
- Kevin Paulich said he liked Alternative 2, but with the water features of Alternative 3. From 100th east he preferred Alternative 3, but to the west he preferred Alternative 2. He believed the bungalow hotel went nicely with the water feature.
- Rich Wagner asked if any of the new buildings in Alternative 2 or 3 require zone changes. *Yes, in Alternative 3, the way it is currently drawn.*
- Rich followed up and asked if restaurant use was currently zoned in the area. *The area you are referencing is currently zoned office and it doesn't allow a wide array of uses.*
- Al Yuen asked if the City had any interest in the Chevron site. *We do not have any plans for the site; it has changed hands in recent years.*
- Marcelle Lynde identified that permitting constraints may be an issue if there is a harder landscape along the waterfront. *Thanks for raising this point. Down the line, as we refine alternatives they will get weighed against State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) issues.*

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Vancouver has a hard-edged promenade but there is still a natural edge to the water. Although the promenade is pulled back, there is still crispness to the line.

- Stu Vander Hoek asked if the project team would bring back refined alternatives to the next committee meeting in October. *At this point, we are thinking no that we will use the opportunity to further discuss your comments on these schemes.*
- Kevin Paulich asked if the committee was restricted to picking one alternative or another or if they could combine elements of several. *Yes, we could combine the preferred elements from each alternative.*
- Rich Wagner said the committee was entering into the critical part of the process and needed to get together. He wondered if it was possible to have one to two follow up meetings for the evaluation process. *The next meeting will allow time for more questions as well as review of the highlights of public comment from the Sept. 25 open house. We could do a quick overlay if needed to keep elevating the questions and concerns brought forward.*
- Betina Finley commented her initial feeling was she preferred Alternative 2, with a little bit of Alternative 1 mixed in, but she felt Alternative 3 was most likely to get built.
- Rich Wagner said that the committee spent a lot of time talking about noise and traffic considerations and he didn't feel it was incorporated into the concepts. *These issues of neighborhood impacts are part of the major categories that can put a blanket over any one of these alternatives, but right now we're trying to look at the full range of options. We will consider many of these at the SEPA level of interpretation. We considered issues like parking and circulation in how the parking is dispersed in satellite locations.*
- Rich added he also wasn't sure how the idea of the park being part of a bigger picture was addressed in the concepts, such as taking into account topics like public transit.
- Kevin Paulich said he was impressed with the ideas presented and felt all took into consideration the comments to date. He especially liked the bungalow hotel idea. He could see in all ideas the connection with Downtown Park.
- Stefanie Beighle commented that she sees the future of Bellevue as being more pedestrian friendly. She would like to see in all alternatives a turnaround for a circulator. The elderly population is increasing fast and will need that type of accommodation. All alternatives were beautiful.
- Iris Tocher said she liked the environmentally friendly aspects and area to the west of Alternative 1. She was intrigued by the middle portion of Alternative 2 and the eastern area of Alternative 3. The idea of the Coit Tower also intrigued her. She commented she was also pleased by the flow of increasing intensity from west to east.
- Bob MacMillan stated he would like to talk about traffic from a big picture view and it will be a challenge whichever path is chosen. Since the area will always be faced with an abundance of traffic, a relief mechanism is needed. He suggested NE 8th might provide that mechanism. The City has to look at ways of getting traffic through. The other key piece is to get people in the room who own key parcels (i.e. Chevron site).
- Marcelle Lynde said she liked parts of all alternatives. The soft scapes of Alternative 1 were appealing and she liked vehicle access overlook points, especially for disabled citizens who may not be able to access the park. She was interested in the idea of cottage style development but wondered what zoning changes would have to occur to make it

possible as well as the key constraints. Another thing is that each of the alternatives kept long-term moorage and she could see now how there was a place for long-term use.

- Al Yuen commented he really liked the water concept and the flow of passive to active throughout the park. He did not like the development around the terrace and didn't want to use City property for a hotel or restaurant. He recommended keeping the development on the north side of Main Street and using City property for park use with less commercial emphasis.
- Stu Vander Hoek liked the stream and overlook shown in Alternative 2, as well as the water connection in Alternative 3. He thought the idea of the view towers was intriguing. The project team did a good job in being sensitive to the public and committee input. The visuals were helpful to get an idea of what it represents. He wanted some kind of vehicular access to the Whaling building. He said he looked forward to public input at the open house.

V. Public Comment

Iris Tocher then called on the public audience members who signed up to provide comment.

- Mike Luis: I'm here representing the Eastside Heritage Center and have brought some informational boards we recently displayed at the Meydenbauer festival. We would like to provide a short public briefing for the committee and ask you to keep in mind potential historical design elements down the line. I suggest adding someone to the committee to monitor historic issues.
- Marv Peterson: Thanks for your hard work. I live on the south side of the bay. The visions are good. One thing you need to address as time progresses is the traffic growth on Main Street. I don't like the plan that suggests closing 100th. I already can't access Main Street off of 101st. Tonight I was late to the meeting due to traffic. Traffic has increased significantly as more Medina residents use Lake Washington Boulevard. People living south of Main Street are impacted. 102nd is not a good alternative. There are huge bottlenecks south of Main, on 100th and up to 2nd.
- Jerry Baruffi: I live on Shoreline Drive, right by Pickle Point. The best comment I heard tonight is to not create any commercial development. The property was purchased with our tax dollars for park land. The stream or pathway is wonderful. It looks like it is headed in the right direction.
- Anita Neil: My general impression is related to parking. Don't provide parking west of 100th. It will route traffic through private neighborhoods. You will increase the number of cars by adding more facilities. The loop road by the yacht club is our safety valve-don't block it off. Keep the site traditional as a green park.

VI. Adjourn

Mike noted that staff was looking at an alternate date other than October 18th for the next Steering Committee meeting due to Sasaki's availability. He would coordinate with the consultant team and members to identify a better time. Iris then thanked the public for their comments and reminded participants about the upcoming public open house on Tuesday, September 25. The meeting was then adjourned.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Provide information about parking and traffic implications of the different alternatives
- Provide information about any land use changes required to implement the different alternatives
- Invite key property owners to future committee meetings
- Confirm October Steering Committee date

PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS (who signed in):

- Sandra Boyd
- Pegi Barthelow
- Shannyn Scovil
- Howard Henry
- Angela Currie
- Terry Greve
- Erin & John O'Neil
- Aaron Dichter
- Pete Marshall
- Ray Fisher
- Robert Sheehan
- Linda Osborn
- Stuart Kolodner
- Bill Sternoff
- Eileen Shultz
- Mustafa Sagiroglu
- Hank & Lois Chellson
- Stan Beckelman
- Ron Bindon
- Doug McCaughey
- Jerry Baruffi
- Anita Neil
- Laura Basacchi
- Wendy Lehman
- Stuart Currie
- John O'Neil
- Bob Cooch
- Carol & Jay Starr
- Janet Herrett
- Michael McCannel
- Nathan Rimmer
- Kevin Austin
- Kathleen & John Kinchloe
- Betty & Leonard Schwind
- Robert & Connie Brog
- Scott & Susan Gilson
- Marv Peterson