



**PORTLAND PARKS BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
February 5, 2014
8:00 – 9:30 a.m.
Lovejoy Room, City Hall**

Board members present: Mike Alexander, Judy BlueHorse Skelton, Kathy Fong Stephens, Nick Hardigg, Dion Jordan, Tony Magliano, Andy Nelson, Jim Owens, Linda Robinson, Bob Sallinger, Tricia Tillman, Sue Van Brocklin, Julie Vigeland, Mauricio Villarreal

Board members absent: Mary Anne Cassin, Meryl Redisch, Shelli Romero, Christa Thoeresz

Staff present: Eileen Argentina, Mike Abbaté, Margaret Evans, Warren Jimenez, Todd Lofgren, Kia Selley, Jeff Shaffer

Call to order Andy Nelson, Chair, called the meeting to order. He thanked everyone for the significant time they have put in over the last two months on the Parks Board and Budget Advisory Committee.

Park of the Month Park of the month for January was Matt Dishman Community Center, and during the last Parks Board meeting, there were good reflections on the heritage and significance of the center. February will be Sewallcrest Park in inner Southeast near Hosford-Abernethy.

Approval of the minutes Linda Robinson noted that there were several changes needed for clarification to the January 8th meeting minutes. These changes included clarification on the consideration of a smoke free policy for Portland Parks (adding Parks, to make clear the policy is not for all of Portland). Clarification was also needed on the collection of SDCs, and the distribution of SDCs on pages 2 and 3. The addition of PDC to a paragraph on page 3 on urban renewal funding opportunities was also needed. Clarification was also needed on page 4 on the description of Parklane as a 20-acre parcel adjacent to an existing park. Linda also asked about synthetic fields proposed at Lents park, and Mike Abbaté confirmed that yes, synthetic fields are being considered for Lents. A change was also needed to the wording on page 6, relating to a segment of Sullivan's Gulch that also happens to be related to Gateway Green. These changes have been made to the minutes. With changes, the board voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

Chair Update Andy Nelson announced that the Parks Board will have 3 openings on July 1st, and asked for volunteers to serve on a nominating committee. Julie Vigeland noted that she served on the last nominating committee and that it was a great experience. She recommended it, and said that it takes some time, but is well worth it.

Foundation update Nick Hardigg noted that the PP&R e-newsletter was great for increased messaging, and he was glad that the new parks were presented as step one, not a solution. He said that recent Foundation messaging included information about the new interpretive displays at Hoyt Arboretum, which they were pleased to support. He said the Foundation has set a tentative date for Parke Diem, but they are not announcing the dates yet. There is strong interest, and lots of groups want to join. He noted that an NRPA article will be coming out soon on Parke Diem as a model, and he said that they are happy to share the model to help other cities. He noted that they are involved in a new capital project, a Wildwood Trail pedestrian foot bridge to cross over Burnside. They hope to complete the project entirely through private fundraising. It will be an asset for the whole city and one that PP&R has wanted for decades. He noted that this is a community partnership. Another project includes a partnership with the Friends of Peninsula Rose Gardens for an additional 800 rose bushes. He commented that it is great what communities can do when they are supported and encouraged.

BPS Comprehensive Plan update Andy Nelson reported that Mary Anne Cassin, Kathy Fong Stevens, Jim Owens, and Meryl Redisch will meet later this month to draft comments for the Bureau of Planning & Sustainability's Comprehensive Plan. Kathy noted that Meryl Redisch has shared comments from the Audubon Society, and they will look at those first. Andy said that the goal will be to have a draft ready for the Park Board's review at the March meeting, and then get feedback to BPS.

Equity Committee update In 2011, the Parks Board proposed several actions on equity. The Parks Board equity committee, Judy Bluehorse Skelton, Dion Jordan, Tricia Tillman, and Julie Vigeland, met several times with PP&R staff, reviewed performance measures and prepared feedback on progress toward these goals.

Tricia Tillman thanked PP&R staff, Warren Jimenez, Margaret Evans and Jennifer Yocom. She said that the committee left meetings feeling really proud to be a part of the shift that Parks is making in equity. She noted that they looked at 2 different pieces – the affirmation statement developed by the Board, as well as a number of performance measures. She said that it was good to see the amount of details on hires, promotions, and management level staff as a baseline to see where progress can be made over time. They were also able to identify other measures to begin tracking. She noted that they made a few red line changes, in terms of how we look at equity – they added disability, and talked about staff diversity reflecting proportionately (with goal to exceed) the make-up of the community, and the demographic of children that access the parks, which is more diverse than the adult population.

Tricia gave an overview of the equity committee's discussions and recommendations. Suggestions included hearing regularly from staff on Parks employment data --permanent FTE, seasonal, charts by departments, specific leadership, hiring, recruitment, advancement, retention. They are also interested in seeing data on the candidate pool that Parks is able to attract, who is getting appointed, who is getting promoted, and the breakdown of PP&R management team in terms of represented, and non-represented employees. They also want to look at how dollars are being allocated to serve underrepresented populations. In all surveys and community input, they suggest looking at demographic information and

how priorities might differ for communities. They suggested an equity tool in the budget process. The equity committee also suggested collaborating with underserved populations to create recreation activities, park design, and natural areas using a broad array of partnerships. Tricia noted that they also talked about culturally specific advisory committees, and open lines of communication between culturally specific communities on events like family days. She said that they also discussed tracking contracting – minority, women, and small business contracts, as well as strengthening and enhancing openness and transparency. For the internal employee survey, the committee noted that the survey doesn't collect demographic data, and they suggested including that to note any differences in the work experience. Also, training cultural competency and diversity trainings were suggested.

Julie Vigeland noted that as an advisory group, it's not the Park Board's role to say you will go do this, but it's a guideline for what they would like to see. Mike Abbaté noted that PP&R wants to set the standard across City Bureaus in collaboration with the Office of Equity and Human Rights. The Parks Board believes that PP&R is uniquely positioned to lead the city in diversity efforts.

Kathy Fong Stevens asked for clarification on language around hiring that refers to exceeding broad diversity, and noted that this could skew the other way. She also asked for clarification on language concerning equity in the environment, and asked if this refers to geography. Eileen Argentina noted that this may be a reference to environmental justice and community health. Linda Robinson commented that this could refer to more trees, particularly where it's needed for air quality.

The Parks Board recommended inviting representatives from the Office of Equity and Human Rights to be present for the March meeting for approving the process.

Warren Jimenez commented that he really appreciated the focus of the committee, particularly on performance measures. Formalizing them will be important for the Bureau, and continuing to track performance measures builds in the joint accountability. He thanked the committee for their commitment.

Julie noted that they were provided lots of documents, and said that these might be useful to see in relation to the committee's recommendation. She suggested they might look again in three years, to measure the difference. Linda Robinson noted that she would be interested in seeing the documentation, particularly on employment.

Dion Jordan commented that PP&R is really positioned to lead this work for the City, and take advantage of that opportunity. Judy Bluehorse Skelton echoed that sentiment, and noted that this is particularly important for the children.

Andy noted that the next step will be for Mike Abbaté to arrange with the Office of Equity and Human Rights to be here for our March meeting, and the final vote will be scheduled in April.

Smoking Ban Andy Nelson noted that there has been an interest in parks smoking bans. Sue Van Brocklin, Tricia Tillman, Julie Vigeland, and Mary Anne Cassin have volunteered to serve on the subcommittee to look into the process for recommending a smoking ban in Portland Parks. Sue reported that their first meeting is Friday. They have invited a guest from Multnomah County, who will come with a list of statewide counties and cities that have already done this, including the proposed smoking ban for Oregon State Parks.

Andy noted that he welcomes this process, and wants to be sure that the process is vetted out well in coordination with the public involvement arm of the bureau.

Linda Robinson noted that it will be important to look at the unintended consequences, and that the committee should look at the issues that came up with the Trimet smoking ban, including where do people go alternatively?

Jim Owens asked about anticipated costs of implementation. Sue noted that enforcement is usually not part of the initial costs. There is an assumption that no one has money for enforcement, but signage will be part of the initial cost. Warren Jimenez noted that the City of Portland is a little different because we have Park Rangers who are already out there. Mike Abbaté noted that process-wise, PP&R will look to the Parks Board subcommittee to research and look at what other entities are doing, and then come with a recommendation. He said that PP&R staff will figure out the hard and fast details in concert with the Commissioner. He recommended that the subcommittee stay to the higher level. Unintended consequences are good to think about, but they don't need to work out every detail in their recommendation. He noted that if the decision is made to go forward with a ban, the Commissioner will decide about allocating staff resources. Sue noted that PSU is trying to get a smoke free ban on the Park Blocks, and everyone is pointing to that precedent. If PSU can't do it, then how can we do it for the whole city? Warren noted that the park blocks associated with the campus are now smoke free.

Tony Magliano commented that he would like to see more on data and implications. What percentage of the city smokes? What are the populations that this policy would impact in terms of race, and geography in the city? He noted that all of these things are important in looking at a city-wide policy. Judy Bluehorse Skelton noted that data is available by race and age. She said, for example, in the Native American community, 57 percent smoke in the reservation population. She noted that she does not know the figure for the urban population. Linda Robinson commented that it is important to think about who will be impacted and kept from using the parks. Warren noted that PP&R staff could be really helpful. He said that Cynthia Castro is helping with a lot of initiatives, and she will be a good point person. She has a Master's in Public Health, and has already put together a one pager on the issue.

Budget update Mike Abbaté reported that PP&R's requested budget was submitted, and the number one thing was Tabor Yard. Part of the process was to prioritize each of those packages. Mike noted that conversations have started internally. On Friday, he, Warren and Commissioner Fritz met with the Mayor to preview and talk through support. He said that it is too early to tell what way it's leaning, but we welcomed the opportunity to start presenting our case. He noted that we don't

expect to get everything. There will be a time when we start getting into key conversations with the City, and we will look to the Budget Advisory Committee to help support our case. The next thing we'll share with the BAC is how you can continue to be involved in this process. It will pick up in March, and we anticipate some public community forums. Mike said that we will present our budget to a city wide budget committee and City Council. He noted that the preliminary conversation with the Mayor got us a long way in presenting specific packages. We are not exactly sure on the date and format of the Council presentation, but we will have more information soon.

Andy said that it sounds like there will be more information to share at the next meeting, and noted that it sounds like we have support on the Council. Mike noted that four of the five have been Parks Commissioners in the past. Andy commented that it has certainly been a more enjoyable process this year.

Master Plan updates

Brett Horner, PP&R Planning and Design Manager, presented master plans for Beech Park and Gateway Park & Plaza. He noted that the presentations tie back to the 2020 Vision, with a goal to integrate the new parks into the existing neighborhoods. One is a shopping district, another is near a school. Both projects will integrate sustainability. For both projects, PP&R engaged diverse populations as part of the planning with multilingual outreach. In the case of Beech, PP&R used the school, adjacent to the park to reach the community.

Beech Park is situated with I-205 to the West, I-84 to the South and the Columbia river to the North. The site is adjacent to three Parkrose schools in the area. PP&R worked with the Parkrose School District, Sun Schools, and boys and girls program there. It is an unusual hourglass shape, with two big pieces, coming to a point in the middle. Formerly farmland, there is some farming going on in the adjacent area. The site has great views. There are a number of equity and sustainability goals with the project that relate back to the 2020 Vision. Sustainability goals include looking at native plantings, stormwater treatment, and using less turf than we would have used 10 or 20 years ago. The northern end will include an off leash area, stormwater treatment, and play area. There will be a nice pathway loop that will tie the two areas together. The southern half will include basketball, soccer, community garden, picnic, natural planting area, and parking. We will do limited public reengagement. For the biking/skate park, we will decide if that will be a soft surface like a pump track or a hard surface skate park. Acquisition of land for preferred entrance is still needed.

Jim Owens asked about acquiring land at the pinch point, and Brett said that we will work out an easement with Shaver Elementary. Mike Abbaté noted that the school has been great working with us on that.

Kathy Fong Stevens asked if the pathway will be wide enough for bike and pedestrian lanes, and Brett said that it will probably be shared. It will be wide enough for our parks vehicles, so it will be about 10 feet wide.

Brett turned to the master plan for Gateway Urban Plaza, showing historic photos of the iconic gateway arch in the 50s. He noted that the historic arch is no longer there, but it would have been very close to the site of the new park. The 4 acre site

will include 3.5 acres for the park, and .5 acres for PDC to build a building on Halsey. The site is in an urban renewal area, and we purchased it in cooperation with PDC. Brett noted that it will provide really good park service because we don't have any other parks in this area. This project captures the most new households served. Brett showed pictures of some perimeter streets, as well as pictures taken from PP&R outreach meetings and events, including an ice cream social. He noted there was good participation. The design team went through various options for where the building would be in relation to the park. He showed a couple of early design alternatives. He noted that the PDC building will include mixed use, condos, retail, and the park will have a central lawn, un-programmed open space, plaza, as well as hard surface for farmer's market and events. He noted that the park will have good synergy with the building. The design includes a water feature near the building, which will be interactive, similar to Director Park. There will be a gathering space for small concert events, as well as play areas, skate spot (or skate dot – low scale may have stairs and rails). He noted that the water feature could have night lighting. The plan includes a naturalistic play experience area – stones to hop on, natural materials, and might also incorporate standard play features. A fitness component is also included with a path loop - 6 laps around the oval will be a mile. Edge details will be included for stormwater enhancement. Brett said that the residential units in the building will look toward the park, noting that this will mean good eyes on the park.

Andy Nelson asked how public involvement shaped the design of the park. For Beech, Brett said that the skate spot came from the community. He also noted that the need for an off leash dog area became a big issue. Linda Robinson noted that there are no other off leash options in the area. On gateway, Brett said that there was a lot of discussion on building placement. Linda noted that there was concern that the park had enough frontage on Halsey so that you could see that there was a park there. She noted that there is still a little concern because it is a one way going east. There is a focus on the need for safe places to cross from Weidler and Halsey, and added crossings may slow traffic, and bring more attention to the park. It was noted that having the plaza at Gateway was really important to the community. Linda Robinson noted that the Parkrose farmers market is located at 125th and Halsey, but they thought of art fairs. The water feature could be turned off for events.

Tricia Tillman asked about accessible play features like those at Harper's Playground. Brett said that PP&R has always had a goal for another fully accessible playground, probably in east Portland. He noted that Beech may be that opportunity. He said that ADA has changed, in terms of surfacing, and we want to go beyond that. Mike Abbaté noted that both will be accessible, but the question is do you exceed the minimum standard, or go beyond. The question is the surface that you put in. A rubber surface comes with a half million dollar price tag. Mike noted that for the Dawson Park play area renovation, a wood chip surface would have met the ADA surface requirements. To upgrade to a rubber surface is about \$100,000 extra, and we added that in to create that surface. The long-term maintenance, he noted, is exponentially more expensive because you can't repair it, as opposed to bark dust, which you can come in and repair.

Jim Owens asked if both projects have the green light, or will they still need to go

to Council. Mike said that we will take to Council the design, and expected maintenance, but the decision doesn't have to go to Council.

Director's update Mike Abbaté noted that the Parks Board may have been following labor issues in the City. He said that our recreation staff in City Nature and our community centers ratified a new contract. After more than a year of hard work, that's really exciting. He said that there is also an agreement with COPEA. Outstanding is DCTU, which is being voted on as we speak, and hopefully will get settled as well.

Mike noted that PP&R will go to Council today, February 5th, on the South Waterfront Greenway Trail. Mike noted that there was an in-water work project with the riverbank. There were delays related to the river, environmental impacts, and now that in-water work is complete. He noted that the purpose of going to Council is to use SDC funds to move forward with trails, and viewpoints.

Mike noted that PP&R has created a new e-newsletter, and is trying to find more devices to engage the public. He said that PP&R is hiring a new Equity and Inclusion Manager. The Commissioner has given final approval for the position, and it has been submitted to BHR. We are very excited moving forward. Kia Selley noted that the search for a Capital Projects Team Manager has been extended.

Announcements Bob Sallinger asked about the Op Ed piece on mountain biking in Forest Park in the Oregonian. Mike Abbaté noted that there was a proposal from Northwest Trail Alliance for a dedicated mountain biking trail in the vicinity of fire lane five. He said that Commissioner Fish asked that there be a number of studies done. Those studies have been done. Mike said that he asked PP&R staff to take those studies and turn it into a tool that could be used for screening projects. The tool is PEM – based on resource management for Forest Park. It is a tool to evaluate as a first screen to see if something is likely to move forward. He noted that Commissioner Fritz recently communicated to Northwest Trail Alliance that she would not support a mountain biking trail in Forest Park. Mike said that when PP&R staff moved this through the PEM tool, you couldn't make up for the mitigation that would be needed. He noted that we need a city wide mountain biking strategy – not piece by piece. Gateway Green fits in that, as well as the Riverview site. A number of years ago, a similar strategy was done for skate parks– how many do you need, where do you need them, etc.

Linda Robinson commented that they are looking at different ways of integrating mountain biking at Gateway Green, and they are coming up with great ideas, including a possible pump track over and around the storm water treatment swales. She said that there will be an open house on February 15th.

Jim Owens commented that he was glad Bob called attention to the Op Ed, and noted that as a casual reader, it sounded like Forest Park was closed to active recreation. He noted that it seems like something to respond to. Mike Abbaté encouraged members of the Parks Board to go to Commissioner Fritz's recent blog post, which provides some clarity. Bob noted that having served on the Forest Park mountain biking planning committee, he feels that the City needs to get out from the Forest Park issue. He noted that it has dragged on. He felt that the article was a cheap shot, and inaccurate, but there is a sense of frustration in that committee,

and they feel like they are being dragged on. At some point, if we are not going to do mountain biking in Forest Park, the City needs to rip the band aide off and stop kicking it down the road. It's a very vocal group. Bob noted that he was frustrated as an environmental advocate – with the kicking down the road.

Adjourn Andy Nelson thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting.