



meeting notes

project River View Natural Area Management Plan

date 01/22/2014 meeting date

time 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

present See below

location: Smith Hall,
Lewis & Clark College

subject PAC Meeting #3

| Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Attendees | |
|---|--|
| Brian Baumann, Northwest Trail Alliance | Steve Manton, Park neighbor (<i>absent</i>) |
| Adam Clinton Baylor, Mazamas Stewardship Manager (<i>absent</i>) | Chris Sautter, South Burlingame resident |
| Sarah Bice, Sellwood resident | Jennifer Seamans, SW Watershed Resource Center |
| Corrina Chase, Tryon Creek Watershed Council | Chad Sorber, OHSU natural area management (<i>absent</i>) |
| Michel George, Lewis & Clark | Charlie Sponsel, Professional mountain biker |
| Michael Karnosh, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde | Mauricio Villarreal, Parks Board member |
| Marci Krass, Willamette Riverkeeper | Jay Withgott, Portland Audubon Board Member |
| Fran Laird, Collins View Neighborhood Association | |

| Meeting Attendees, Including Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) | |
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| Shannah Anderson, Land Acquisition Specialist, BES (TAC) | Emily Roth, Project Manager, Natural Resource Planner, PP&R |
| Mary Bushman, Environmental Specialist, BES (TAC) | Maija Spencer, Public Involvement Specialist, PP&R (TAC) |
| Jeff Hough, Trail Technician, PP&R | Mary Verrilli, Westside Stewardship Coordinator, PP&R |
| Susie Mattke-Robinson, Landscape Architecture Staff, ESA VA | Doug Zenn, Public Involvement Facilitator, Zenn Associates |
| Kendra Petersen-Morgan, Natural Resources Ecologist, PP&R (TAC) | Members of the public |
| Steve Roelof, Project Manager, ESA VA | |

1. Introductions

Attendees of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #3 met at Smith Hall on the campus of Lewis & Clark. The meeting was attended by twelve of the fifteen PAC members, members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the consultant team, and members of the public. Public involvement facilitator Doug Zenn began the meeting by welcoming the group and attendees briefly introduced themselves.

2. Updates: Community Event / Stakeholder Input

Maija Spencer provided an overview of the Community Event, and reviewed general findings from the summary document. The Community Event/Open House Summary is posted online at the project website: <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/62001>. City staff completed interviews with River View Natural Area (RVNA) stakeholders, and the Stakeholder Interview Summary is available on the project website.

3. Review of Project Goals

Emily Roth, Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) Project Manager, reviewed the Draft Project Goals and Guiding Principles with the PAC. She noted the goals are not numbered, and ecological goals are listed first because the property was purchased for ecological protection and water quality function. The goals are listed in order of importance rather than in order of priority. A PAC member asked for clarification of the Desired Future Condition, and a TAC member responded that it is the vegetation trajectory of the site over the next 25 years. Emily then reviewed the Draft Guiding Principles, and noted they are not prioritized or listed in any specific order. She confirmed the group's consensus on the draft goals and guidelines. A PAC member asked if a Friends of RVNA group had formed, and PP&R staff responded the group has yet to form but they are gathering names and information at volunteer events or contact Mary Verrilli, PP&R Stewardship Coordinator.

4. Site Ecology Discussion

Steve Roelof, Project Manager at ESA VA, briefly reviewed the Site Analysis document, noting key figures of Aquatic Network, Site Transportation & Access, and Habitat Management Area. Steve noted the edge zone in the Habitat Management Area figure as the first 200 feet within the property boundary. This edge area should continue to be managed for the spread of invasive species from adjacent properties.

Emily gave an overview presentation on water quality considerations for the streams and wetlands in RVNA. She stated the site was purchased for the good quality streams that provide cold, clear water to the Willamette River for fish habitat. The RVNA plan will aim to enhance the resiliency of the streams and wetlands on the site. In adjacent Powers Marine Park, Streams 2 and 3 are currently being enhanced for fish habitat. Important considerations for water quality protection in RVNA are shading streams, developing a multi-layer canopy, and reducing erosion through streambank restoration. Wetland areas will be maintained to support a diverse wetland plant community. The project team will work with adjacent landowners to treat stormwater before it enters the site. Additionally, the team plans to establish a robust water quality monitoring program and further refine trail Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect water quality.

Emily next gave an overview of Core Habitat, providing the TEES (Terrestrial Ecology Enhancement Strategy) definition as a forest patch that is 30 acres or greater located 200 feet from the property edge.

She mentioned that the larger core area the better for wildlife species. Emily listed results from TAC discussions about habitat and water quality disturbances.

The top disturbances (identified by the TAC) in order are:

- 1) Dogs on and off-leash
- 2) Off- trail use by cyclists and pedestrians
- 3) Illegal camping/party spots that create wildfire risk
- 4) Climate change

Steve next reviewed the Draft Ecological Prescriptions, and he, Emily, and Doug led the group's discussion of the document and site ecology. PAC member questions and comments included:

- Consider listing more specific timelines for prescription projects
- Will the project team set priorities on projects, and are there more long-term versus short term projects. Emily responded that projects listed are a combination of both, some have longer-term planning.
- Some of the projects listed may need to be completed before implementing trail plan (concern that there is long-term study that would hold up work on the trail plan). Set a time frame to do these projects before implementing the plan.
- Consider partnering with other institutions/programs to complete research projects if resources are not available to PP&R. It is better to do fewer projects well, rather than too many.
- Baseline information being collected (by BES) is valuable – good to have preliminary data to set our goal of improvement
- Metro does not allow dogs in parks/natural areas, and RVNA is a good opportunity to have no disturbance from dogs.
- Have slope stability studies have been completed? Emily responded the Sellwood Bridge project has done much of this work. The city's geotech also completed a basic analysis and recommendation for RVNA.
- Importance of educating people about why dogs impact natural areas. Education is valuable tool for successful enforcement of no-dog areas.
- Since there are other parks to walk dogs (Marshall Park) nearby, the Collins View Neighborhood would likely back a closure to dogs at RVNA
- Agree that dogs are disturbing to wildlife and it is likely that park users with dogs will increase (especially visitors from outside of the neighborhood) as the park becomes better known if dogs on-leash are continued to be allowed.

5. Project Update: TAC / Project team progress

Emily provided a project update about the TAC and project team progress. The group is still discussing and defining core habitat area and the buffer area around streams. The project schedule has pushed out two months to accommodate getting the best information from the TAC, PAC, and the public. There will be an additional PAC meeting at the end of February or beginning of March.

Emily also updated the group on working with adjacent landowners planning for invasive management and trail connectivity. PAC member Michel George, representative of Lewis & Clark (L&C) stated that L&C has plans to eliminate invasive ivy across their campus in the next three years. L&C is also working with staff at Tryon Creek Natural Area to remove ivy near the law school, across SW Palatine Hill Road. Emily met with David Noble, Executive Director of the River View Cemetery, and he will consider a proposal from PP&R for connector trails in an undeveloped portion of cemetery property. Emily noted that vandalism is an ongoing concern for RVNA (signs removal, etc.), and reiterated PP&R

are committed to controlling vandalism. She asked that those who see vandalism should report it to PP&R.

6. User Experience Discussion

Steve reviewed the Draft Trail Best Management Practices document. Doug led a discussion on User Experience, asking primary questions:

- 1) What makes for a pleasant user experience?
- 2) What are distractions from that?
- 3) How can these be enhanced or reduced?
- 4) How can we ensure safety?

PAC members provided the following comments about *what makes for a pleasant user experience*:

- Variety for hiking, running, and biking (slope variety and choice of loop variety)
- Being in a healthy forest and habitat without ivy (rare experience)
- Access for recreational activities (such as riding a bike locally to the site, rather than driving), especially if there are no other local options
- Safety and peacefulness
- Sustainability in trail design
- Intrinsic value of the site. Knowing there is an area that is protected for ecology (even if a person can't go there) is important.
- Having wildlife present makes a good experience. Even people on a trail system constitute a disturbance. Some bird species will be sensitive to disturbance (some woodpeckers, owls, and hawks), and will not inhabit the area if disturbed
- Shared use trails and some separate cycling-only trails
- Being able to experience the changing seasons and different plants on site
- Preserving wildlife interior habitat (trails should not bisect natural area)
- Learning opportunities and providing year-round access to the site
- Providing a good place to advance technical cycling skills

PAC members provided the following comments about *what distracts from a good experience*:

- Monotony on trail slopes and lack of choice on loops
- Mixed trail uses can be challenging. As a cyclist, concern about running into pedestrians if difficult sight lines, and concern as a pedestrian about being passed too fast by cyclists.
- Disturbances to wildlife by all users
- Erosion concerns
- Limited carrying capacity if there is an increase in use by future cyclists
- Trails that are too short
- The site is limited in size and it may not be realistic to have as many types of trails. It is hard to categorize size needs for different levels of cyclist users.
- Bicycles can be a weed / invasive carrier into and out of the park, and we need to educate the public about this issue

PAC members provided the following comments about *enhancing the plan for a good user experience*:

- Consider the opportunity to let RVNA be maintained for 3-5 years by PP&R and "friends of" group to see what would happen to the ecology of the site
- Making trails accessible / usable in the wet season

- Keep some challenging trails for hiking and biking
- Separated trails can be good for all
- One-directional trails that are separated from hiking (example in Lithia Park in Ashland) are a good example
- Wildlife / habitat value and creating core habitat areas
- Trails with good drainage and built to fit use to reduce erosion. Steve noted the trail BMPs were derived from input from multiple agencies, and a primary goal of these is to minimize erosion.
- A PAC member noted it may be helpful for the bike community to prioritize trail level needs. Emily responded that any trails built in RVNA will be designed to PP&R trail guidelines for a cross-country experience (not downhill trails). There may be steeper trails, but they will be built to standard. PP&R is also considering an ADA accessible trail in the natural area.
- Connecting to other bike trails to get more mileage

Doug closed the user experience discussion.

7. Volunteer Opportunities

Kendra Petersen-Morgan stated that a RVNA plant restoration volunteer event will be held on February 15th. Interested parties should contact Mary Verrilli, Stewardship Coordinator. Information about this volunteer event is also listed on the project website. Mary has also been collecting information from volunteer events about people interested in joining a Friends of RVNA group. Also, planting crews will begin to plant 50,000 trees and shrubs on-site, starting Tuesday, January 28.

8. Public Comment / Next Steps / Wrap-Up

Doug invited public attendees of the meeting to share comments. Public attendees provided the following comments and questions:

- If the next community event was held at Lewis & Clark, there may be more neighborhood participation
- Request for new meeting table layout to improve acoustics for the public audience
- Want to have biking in RVNA, but route trails around a big core area for preservation. Sensitive species won't want to live near noisy Macadam Ave area, which is better location for trails.
- Note that technical bicycle trails often require removing less vegetation (trails can be routed around large species), and easier trails often require removing more vegetation.
- A member of the public asked if Metro was involved in the project (as holder of the property), and Emily stated a RVNA TAC member is a Metro ecologist
- Request permit parking for residents near RVNA (parking in front of home is an issue)
- A member of the public asked if parking needs to be provided, and Emily responded that there is no requirement that PP&R must provide a parking lot for RVNA
- People typically do not want their dogs to run off-leash in mountain biking area
- Safety concerns about vehicle speeding and no sidewalks in the neighborhood
- Short, compact trails such as Lost Lakes Park in Vancouver, B.C. could be a good model for the site
- Prefer not having multi-use trails, they are not a safe space to explore
- Mixing transport types is challenging, and it is better to separate bikes and pedestrians

Emily reviewed next steps, noting the additional TAC meeting and upcoming PAC meeting that will be scheduled for late February or March (per the revised schedule). She adjourned the meeting, thanking the PAC for great input, and thanked the community attendees for providing comments.