



PIR Advisory Committee Meeting
Overlook House
December 17, 2013

Members in Attendance:

Jim Owen
Bob Naito
Angela Moose
Steve Rupert
Amanda Kelly-Lopez
Clint Culpepper
Art Hussey
John Dehl
Janice Logan

Staff in Attendance:

Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong
Ben Schonberger
Mark Wiggington
Allen Schmidt
Stephan

Joan Brown-Kline, Meeting Facilitator
Victoria Morgan, Meeting Recorder

I. Welcome and Introductions:

A. Joan Brown-Kline welcomed members of the newly-formed PIR Advisory Committee. She gave an overview of what the meeting would cover.

B. Members introduced themselves and spoke about the gifts they bring to the committee. Below are some of the responses:

Jim Owen: Has worked on the Portland Parks & Recreation Board and has experience in land-use planning.

Clint Culpepper: Bicycle Race Coordinator, brings bicycle race knowledge and experience at PIR.

Bob Naito: Real Estate Developer, sits on the pedestrian bridge building committee; brings knowledge of development, especially within specific environments. Also raced bicycles at PIR as a young person.

Art Hussey: Has been actively involved in PIR for years; currently involved in bringing young people out to the track, rather than having them race in the streets.

John Dehl: Has been involved with PIR since the mid-1960's; he brings a desire to help sustain the quality of PIR racing over the ten-year Master Plan.

Ben Schonberger: Land-use Consultant; is working on the PIR Master Plan and brings his experience working on the previous Plan.

Allen Schmidt: Designer/Planner for Portland Parks & Recreation; will work to incorporate all groups' interests into the Master Plan.

Janice Logan: Oregon Motorcycle Road Racing Association; she has experience working with the Super Sport Riders Club, as well as other car clubs, and has previous experience working on the 1993 Master Plan. She brings a wealth of historical knowledge regarding PIR.

Mark Wiggington: is a PPR staff member; runs PIR for the City of Portland. Mark raced go-karts at PIR and traveled with a pro racing team. He brings a strong sense of stewardship and preservation to the Committee. He wants people to know what a "neat little jewel" we have right here in Portland.

Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong: Community Engagement Manager for PPR; she brings her experience and capacity to build process to the Advisory Committee.

Stephan: PPR Support and Outreach Assistant; he brings the ability to reach out to the multicultural communities in Portland.

Amanda Kelly-Lopez: Project Coordinator for Wisdom of the Elders; has a deep interest in environmental sustainability and resources. She represents the interests of Portland's Native American population in protecting and preserving the natural environment surrounding PIR.

C. Joan asked Advisory Committee members to offer meeting ground rules. Members offered the following suggestions:

- Have respect for the "other side of the story"
- Engage in mutual problem solving
- Speak as if you're right - and listen as if you're wrong
- No cross-talk; have patience with others
- Avoid assumptions
- Be on time

- Attack the problem - not the person
- Come to the meeting prepared
- Work out issues in the room; don't take them outside the committee.

II. Understanding the planning process:

A. Mark gave an historical overview of PIR:

- Until 1906, the area was river bottom land that was flooded twice a year until a series of dikes were built.
- The area became Vanport during WWII, when shipbuilding boomed. Vanport was the second-largest city in Oregon until the devastating flood of 1948.
- The land was transferred to Multnomah County, then to the City of Portland.
- In the late 1940s - early 1950s, the race track was built. Significant capital improvements were made when the Rose Festival Association brought the Champ Car races to the track.
- Now PIR is used for bicycle, motorcycle, off-street and drag racing, as well as foot racing.
- With changing demographics and the economy taking a big hit in 2008, PIR has become a multi-use recreational facility, including: kite flying, electric fliers, Beaches Cruise Club, dog park and event rentals. The facility is an "Enterprise Fund Unit" of PPR, with a \$1.6 million budget; therefore, it is rented out hundreds of times during the year, often multiple times in one day, to meet budget demands.
- The annual swap meet generates significant income for the facility.
- PIR is used by about 400,000 people a year. A recent impact study of PIR on Multnomah County showed that \$40 million was brought in through patronage of nearby restaurants and hotels.
- Larger races draw people regionally (Seattle, Bend, Eugene), while weekday events draw people from the Portland Metro area, including southern Washington.
- As a "quality of life" attraction, PIR is a "gem." It lies within the city limits, so people don't have to drive a long way to enjoy the facility. The surrounding open space is an unusual plus.

B. Allen provided an environmental overview of the PIR site and surrounding area:

- The PIR site is part of the larger Delta Park complex, which includes soccer and baseball parks, Huron Lakes Golf Course, a regional trail system and open wildlife habitat.
- This land incorporates four drainage districts, which are part of the Columbia Corridor. The levee system is vital to the area, and must be maintained and continually certified.
- The section of Denver Avenue that runs under I-5 is part of the environmental protection area, which also stretches to Smyth and Bybee Lakes.
- Question: How does the traffic (I-5, MAX) fit in with the environmental protection of this area?
 - The implementation of MAX has been wildly successful in keeping car traffic down during major events. Nearly 20% of PIR spectators took MAX for the Champ Car races and larger 5K runs.
- Question: Is there any consideration of having an overall network of park amenities and trailways, incorporating PIR, the golf course, ball fields, etc?

- At present, the Master Plan specifically addresses the PIR site; however, ODOT plans to build a bicycle and pedestrian system.
- Question: Would bringing Indy Car racing to PIR be possible?
 - It would cost \$3.5 - 4 million in order to hold a weekend event; however, PIR could only sell about \$1 million in tickets. It would require government funding and heavy sponsorships to begin to make this possible.

C. Issues to consider in creating the Master Plan:

- One would think that Parks-owned properties would all be open space, but some facilities are different, e.g. PIR and Pioneer Courthouse Square.
- The current Master Plan has expired and the City is working on the implementation of a new 10-year plan
- PIR is a special site that balances motor sports and other activities with environmental protection. It provides an entirely different racing experience than most race tracks.
- Due to the unique circumstances of PIR, specific planning applies in order to mitigate issues that arise, including potential development at the site. A liaison from the Bureau of Development Services (BDS) will be involved.
- Given shifting demographics, how do we think people will want to use the track in the next ten years?
- What was not addressed in the previous Master Plan that should have been included?
- Issues to consider for the next Master Plan include: implications of Denver Avenue in planning; what needs to be done with the track in the next 10 years; how do we lessen the restrictions that hampered improvements and developments in the last Plan (e.g. the proposed motorcycle flat track); how do we attract the investors needed for larger projects?

III. The role of the PIR Advisory Committee:

A. The Committee will provide input and advice on Master Plan.

- Ben is the hired architect of the Master Plan.
- The Committee will represent the community's voice on how to do the work; how do we want to use the house that is being designed and built?
- How can we make the house more efficient, so that larger events can be staged? What improvements/developments may be proposed in the next ten years?

- What do we want to see accomplished with this Plan? What levels of service do we want? What values?
- How can we provide improved access to more people?
- PIR 1) provides a racing facility; 2) protects and enhances the natural resources on-site; and 3) must bring in enough revenue to survive. The goal is to enhance all three of these areas.
- The planners welcome the Advisory Committee's recommendations on how to "soften up" the Plan so it's not too constrictive.
- Committee members will come up with Guiding Principles by which solutions will be vetted. Actions taken by PIR must adhere to these principles.

IV. What have we learned in the last ten years?

- Noise levels need to be considered and assessed. The Bridgetown neighborhood cares about the noise.
- PIR needs to be promoted as a public resource; people are unaware of the different types of events that take place at PIR.
- More diversity in usage is possible, for instance: corporate team-building retreats, pow wows, kite competitions, launchings for Native American canoe journey.
- PIR has been sculpted (by events such as the Beaches Cruise-In).
- The Master Plan has design standards; yet it also should have flexibility due to PIR's unique site and resources.
- Need to analyze events: revenue generators vs. debt generators.
- Do lines need to be redrawn to be more accommodating for revenue- generating events?
- Look at unintentional restraints on potential projects and how they can be avoided in the next Master Plan.
- How do we better identify what the community would like to see at PIR?
 - Send out user surveys on what could be done to improve the PIR experience? (Suggestion: Could we use Survey Monkey to distribute survey to user groups?)
 - Create a link to PIR Event Coordinator.
 - Develop a mailing list to promote upcoming events, PIR news, etc.
 - A PIR Open House event is being planned. The public will be invited to tour the facility. Staff will have the opportunity to ask how people would like to use the facility.

V. Next Steps/Wrap-Up:

- Formulate a set of Guiding Principles.

- Take a more In-depth look at what the Master Plan needs to cover; what needs to happen with PIR for it to be successful over the next ten years?
- We need to reach out to the community about PIR. (Should we use surveys? do we send them only to people who actively use PIR?) What about people who barely know PIR exists?
- Conduct stakeholder interviews in support of PIR.
- Look at the “Conditional Use” Master Plan that is now on line.
- Review the materials in your notebooks, at least the first 40 pages and the maps, before the next meeting.

VI. The next PIR Advisory Committee Meeting will be in February, 2014. The committee will meet three to four times.

Meeting adjourned.