



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
CITY OF PORTLAND
working for clean rivers

Michael Jordan, Director



PORTLAND
PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

Mike Abbaté, Director

River View Natural Area Management Plan

Project Advisory Committee Meeting #6 Summary

Tuesday, September 22, 2015

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Smith Hall, Lewis & Clark College

Committee Attendees

Brian Baumann, *Northwest Trail Alliance*

Sarah Bice, *Sellwood resident*

Michel George, *Lewis & Clark College*

Fran Laird, *Collins View Neighborhood Association*

Jennifer Seamans, *SW Watershed Resource Center*

Torry Lindbo, *Tyron Creek Watershed Council*

Steve Manton, *Park neighbor*

Chris Sautter, *South Burlingame resident*

Charlie Sponsel, *Professional mountain biker*

Members Absent

Michael Karnosh, *Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde*

Marci Krass, *Willamette Riverkeeper*

Mauricio Villarreal, *Parks Board member*

Jay Withgott, *Portland Audubon Board Member (sent in written comments on plan)*

Project Staff and Technical Advisory Committee Members

Mary Bushman, *Bureau of Environmental Services*

Kate Holleran, *Metro*

Kendra Petersen Morgan, *Portland Parks & Recreation*

Emily Roth, *Project Manager, Portland Parks and Recreation*

Maija Spencer, *Portland Parks & Recreation*

Jessica Pickul, *JLA Public Involvement*

Kristen Kibler, *JLA Public Involvement*

Steve Roelof, *Project Manager, ESA Vigil/Agrimis*

Welcome and Introductions

Kristen Kibler, JLA Public Involvement, welcomed Project Advisory Committee (PAC) members to the final meeting for the River View Natural Area Management Plan. She led the committee through group introductions and reviewed the meeting agenda. At this meeting, members would be able to share their thoughts, ask clarifying questions and make final recommendations to project staff on the draft plan on forwarding it to the bureau directors.

Work Plan Update

Emily Roth, Portland Parks and Recreation, provided an update on project next steps. She explained that final comments from the PAC will be incorporated into the plan, as possible. The plan document will be finished in September 2015. Next, a recommendation (staff report along with the plan) will be given to the directors for review in October. The plan will be presented to City Council this December. PAC members and people included on the project stakeholder list will be notified of City Council presentation date, which is open to the public. In addition, PAC members can speak directly to City Council about the plan at that time. Once accepted by City Council, implementation of the plan will begin.

A member of the public asked when they will be able to review the draft plan. Emily responded that it will be available before it goes to City Council, which at a minimum will be two weeks prior to the presentation. Council will hear all comments at that December council date.

PAC Comments on Plan

Steve Roelof, ESA Vigil-Agrimis, reviewed the final draft plan sections with the PAC. He explained that everything included in the plan has already been reviewed and talked about with the committee. Since the last meeting, staff refined language and graphics and added construction cost estimates. These estimates come to about \$5 million dollars, which just considers hard costs, design and project management costs. This work can be done in phases, so that total is not needed up front in order to get started. The Appendices have more detailed figures that also have meaning to the plan and documents from the public process and public meetings.

Emily suggested that the group start by talking about the estimated construction costs and then open it up to talk about the plan. The following is a summary of that discussion – some points below represent individual comments, while some summarize group discussion items:

- Did you prioritize the construction costs? Emily responded that the construction items were not prioritized, however typically PP&R would focus on trails, parking and access first.

- Parking and access amenities are expensive. Emily explained that PP&R may be required to do the parking improvements as a part of the permitting process to do the trails.
- On the Access and Management Concept Map, the purple dots represent existing stormwater outfall into streams. Two are currently on the map – one on the north side and one on the south side. There isn't one to show water going into the west side from the headwaters from stream 2. This area is surrounded by housing. Where is that indicated in the budget? Staff responded that it is not included because it is considered offsite, so it is not a part of this plan. Mary Bushman, Bureau of Environmental Services, added that Lewis and Clark College and the cemetery are private properties, so they wouldn't be considered in the larger BES budget. The area by Corbett is not considered as a part of this project but BES is working to look at this property. Community members can contact Mary directly to get more info. At this time, off-site treatment is not a part of this project but BES is working with private land owners to treat stormwater. Within the project area, stormwater solutions are accounted for with the Ecological Prescriptions line item.
- There is a data gap in the stream assessment. Is there a budget item to address that? This is also accounted for with the Ecological Prescriptions line item.
- Does the budget only consider the one culvert replacement for stream crossings? No, it considers six streams crossings within the site. It does not include the Highway 43 crossing since it is out of the project area. Emily later clarified that the Stream 6 budget item is separate from the other culverts as it is a larger restoration project and is a high priority.
- There is a lot of money allocated toward trail improvements, especially the culvert replacement. The member would rather see more emphasis focused on ecological goals and improvement since that was the goal of the project. For example, they would rather see more resources placed towards connecting stream 6 to the Willamette River. Emily explained that the culvert needs to be improved because it is failing and the ecologists have identified that as one of the project's top priorities. It is not all going towards trail improvements.
- Jay Withgott submitted a letter that states that he thinks the plan should be approved. In it he shared his thoughts on what he agrees with and disagrees with in the plan. The group reviewed his letter.
- The plan headings match most of the project goals with the exception of Education and Interpretation. Can the headings be updated to reflect that that goal? Staff will look into this.
- Several PAC members brought up how mountain biking use should have been discussed through this planning process. Those that brought this issue up didn't consider this a fault of the project team, but it could have been handled better. One person shared that they felt the lack of discussion on mountain biking undermined the process. Additional comments included that mountain bikers are trail advocates and volunteers; off-road cyclists need a place to ride; this is an equity issue because it restricts people from being able to access these trails if they don't have a car; The PAC was able to talk about dogs, but haven't had the opportunity to talk about mountain biking. It would have been nice to have made a decision as a group and would have been nice to have known that it was off the table from the beginning. Two written letters were submitted to staff that addressed this issue of the discussion/process and will be included in the Public Involvement Appendix of the final plan.
- Within the PAC meeting, there was a difference of opinion on whether mountain biking should have been discussed further with this process.

- Several members stated that they felt the project team did an overall good job with the plan.
- The plan proposal is not great for runners, hikers or bikers. A perimeter loop is not a good recreational solution. People need advanced and challenging trails in the Portland-area. Not just mountain bikers, even hikers want challenging hikes with elevation. Emily responded that trails included in this plan need to meet PP&R guidelines. Forest Park has more challenging trails and the majority were built before PP&R trail guidelines were adopted.
- Water and interior habitat are the two things that we are trying to improve with this plan. We have heard from experts that have stated that interior trails don't impact water quality. Prohibiting interiors trails is unnecessary and creates a recreation area that doesn't meet needs or user desires.
- If the focus is on water quality than that should be the priority over all. The plan should be conservative to all other uses. Also, there is specific language about slope grades (10 -15 %) however it is not specific with how long this can go for. These are some of the details that should be specified in order to ensure that our long-term goals of protecting water quality are maintained.
- One member said that they support the plan as it is laid out, with the understanding that there will be some adjustments in the field during design based on trail standards.
- The Collins View Neighborhood Association recognizes that some of its neighbors are mountain bikers and responsible dog walkers. That said, the NA supports what is in the plan as it is in accordance with Parks guidelines. The NA has submitted a letter for consideration by plan staff. This will be included in the Public Involvement Appendix of the plan
- One of the members shared several thoughts. First, they would like to make sure that all stormwater off puts are addressed with the plan. The City needs to recognize the smaller streams and their impact on water quality throughout Portland and on the Willamette River. They thanked the committee and staff and said that they really liked the process. They added that they think the committee adequately addressed mountain biking. The committee put water quality first, over recreation. They think we need a comprehensive plan on mountain biking. Additionally, partnerships will be important to implement the Ecological Prescriptions in this plan. Staff should seek out more partnerships with more than BES, but also with USGS Ecological Survey, EPA, PSU, etc. Lastly, dogs are now prohibited but people are still bringing their dogs. Adding additional signs will help build awareness and education of the new restriction.
- A member voiced support for a 35 acre interior habitat, but was concerned that there may not be enough park ranger resources.
- In the case made for habitat connectivity only west side natural areas are referenced in the plan as providing wildlife connectivity. Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge should be added or referenced. The River View Natural Area is a part of a greater wildlife corridor that includes connections and resources on both sides of the river.
- Collins View has a lot of walkers who no longer feel safe walking in RVNA.
- Trail improvements should be prioritized. As we look at long-term operations and maintenance, we should look for additional opportunities to decommission old trails.
- Additional signage should be used to help with education and habitat management, especially near property boundaries.
- Neighbors are the daily eyes and ears on the area. Look for opportunities to partner with the neighborhood.

- One of the goals is to increase access to nature. Trail density affects habitat so through this plan's recommendation of a protected interior, it will help neighbors to experience a natural habitat.

Kristen concluded this discussion by summarizing that it generally sounds like the PAC is supportive of the plan. Fran, Jennifer, Steve, Michel, Torrey, and Sarah support the plan, and a letter of support from Jay, with the exception of Brian, Chris and Charlie who do not support the plan because of the exclusion of mountain biking from the plan and the discussion. Their dissenting opinion letter will be included in the Public Involvement Appendix of the plan.

Any additional thoughts should be emailed to Emily as soon as possible. They will be included in the Appendix of the plan.

Public Comment (not verbatim comments)

- Good job! Nothing is ever perfect but this will help move it along.
- By looking at this project in such a narrow focus, we have forgotten the bigger concept that this is a part of a much bigger natural area effort. This is a part of Metro's Title 13 compliance efforts and is a part of a much bigger wildlife corridor. Many local agencies have been meeting to improve the water and wildlife connections. Please take a look at the bigger picture at how this connects to Tryon Creek.
- A member of the public shared that they are in favor of the loop trail. It is not the job of this plan to make the trails thrilling. There have been too many comments dealing with a minority group that should be addressed with the Off Road Cycling Plan.

Next Steps

Kendra Petersen-Morgan, Portland Parks and Recreation, has heard previous concerns by the PAC on the activity and uses happening in the park. She provided an update that since July 1st, the park rangers have received 3 calls total, which all related to illegal camping. She reminded the group that there are 7 rangers total, who are divided among the entire City (2 in Washington Park, 2 assigned to downtown sites and 1 assigned to Forest Park) and as of Oct. 1 there will be no dedicated Rangers in natural areas except Forest Park. If PAC members are interested in the ranger program and funding, they should raise their concerns as a member of the public with the City Council.

Someone asked where the camps were located? There is a spot above stream 6 and one above Highway 43. Neighbors can address this by calling the rangers directly at 503-823-1637. Emails do not go into the log. Kendra encouraged people to call the ranger line directly because that's how they log data.

Kendra also brought up long-term stewardship opportunities of the site. A group will be created that everyone who uses the site can join. This process will be initiated once the plan is complete. Parks will be involved in this process since there is so much interest. Information will be on the website, at events, and will be emailed out to the interested parties list.

She reminded the PAC that No Ivy Day is on October 24. School groups are welcome to participate.

Emily addressed a concern that has been brought up to PP&R about how some neighbors have stated that they don't feel safe on the site. PP&R cannot directly affect what is posted on online sites between neighbors but the Office Neighborhood Involvement is able to mediate conflicts in the area via Resolution NW. She reminded everyone to be mindful and respectful to their neighbors. She also reinforced that PP&R stresses that members of the community should not take personal risks to enforce PP&R rules. Staff is responsible for enforcement and outreach. If there is a crime in process, call 911.

A final question was raised about how the \$250,000 from the Sellwood Bridge project will be applied towards this project. The money was used towards restoration of the site. Separately, the Sellwood Bridge Project is doing restoration work on streams 2 and 3 in Powers Marine Park.

Emily concluded the meeting by recognizing the hard work that the TAC and PAC put into the plan and thanked the staff and consultants. She thanked everyone who put in so much work to get the plan done.

Meeting adjourned.