

## **Errol Heights Park Community Advisory Committee**

Wednesday, November 14, 6:30pm – 8:45pm  
SMILE Station, 8210 SE 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Portland, OR

### **MEETING SUMMARY**

#### **MEETING OUTCOMES/GOALS**

This was the fifth meeting of the Errol Heights Park’s Community Advisory Committee. The focus of the meeting was to have the committee review a final park design concept and provide feedback to the design team.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Brett Bolstad, Paul Ciri, Caryn Indigo Corwin, Joshua Freeman, Anne Hettick, Erich Pacheco, Michael Riley, Jennon Rugg

**Absent:** Pamela Hodge, Karl Lee, Adrienne Moat, Gillian Murr, Fon Zhang

**Staff present:** George Lozovoy, Christian Haaning, Ali Young (BES)

**Consultants:** Ryan Carlson (Mayer/Reed), Emily Kuo (Mayer/Reed), Jessica Pickul (JLA), Allison Brown (JLA)

#### **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND AGENDA REVIEW**

Allison Brown, JLA, welcomed the group and asked the members to introduce themselves by explaining their favorite way to stay active during the winter.

Allison reviewed the meeting agenda with the committee. The agenda was as follows:

1. Public Comment
2. Project Updates
3. Recap and Key Theme Identification
4. Preferred Site Plan Presentation and Review
5. Next Steps and Close

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Two members of the public provided comment at the meeting. The following is a summary of those comments:

- **Deer commonly frequent the upper part of the park as a part of their habitat. Consider locating the playground in one of the large areas near the community garden to allow parents to watch their children while they garden, and to prevent displacing the local deer.**
  - **A committee member responded to this comment by noting that deer live in many other parts of the park.**



- **It was mentioned that the decision is likely to close the road near the garden. If this is the case, can emergency vehicles get through?** Emergency vehicles will be able to access the park.

## PROJECT UPDATES

George Lozovoy, Portland Parks and Recreation, provided a few updates regarding the closure of SE Tenino Ct. as requested by the Committee.

### Tenino Court Update

As of last year, Tenino Ct. was going to move through the community garden. The 2005 Master Plan explored including a soccer field, however, the support for a soccer field is low and therefore paving Tenino Ct. is no longer necessary.

Water lines run along the right-of-way which requires access for maintenance. PBOT has agreed that the road can be closed. We are currently collecting signatures confirming that people have been informed of the closure, but it should be noted that the signatures do not indicate support. PBOT will be closing the road to vehicles with the condition that bicycle and pedestrian access must be maintained, and it is currently being determined whether emergency vehicle access will be maintained. In the future, this street will be a pathway that can be used by pedestrians and bicyclists, allowing both portions of the park to be better integrated.

Questions and comments regarding the closure of SE Tenino Ct. included:

- **Now that Tenino Court will not be paved and will be closed to vehicles, where with the funding from that portion of the LID project go?** Funding will be redirected into park development.
- **Will gardeners have access for delivering mulch and other materials and supplies?** Yes, maintenance vehicles will have access via Tenino Ct.
- **Will a fire hydrant be added to the park?** No, there isn't a fire hydrant in the park currently, and one won't be added. Once it's in the right-of-way it is out of the Parks Department's control.
- **Has a decision been made about the Portland Loo Restrooms and the set hours of the park?** The design being reviewed today includes restrooms. The Portland Loo Restrooms, maintenance equipment, and other amenities included in the park will follow the park's daily closure of 12:00AM and 5:00AM.

### Permitting Update

George updated the Committee on the permitting process explaining that the Department of State Lands designated portions of the park as a wetland which means that anything the Parks Department would like to do areas of high water will need a permit. George explained that the current plans for those areas include removing and replacing the existing bridge, and creating educational areas.

## RECAP OF COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

Ryan Carlson, Mayer/Reed, began by explaining that the project staff took the input from the last Committee meeting and developed a refined design option. He told the Committee that at this meeting they would have the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the design option before it is brought to the open house on December 1. Following the open house, the Committee will meet one more time in January followed by several months of staff review and refinement.

Ryan explained that based on the input from the last meeting, project staff had determined the following directions from the Committee:

### Trails:

- Support for the addition of new trails
- Provide two connections to the upper park
- Connect the switchback trail to the stairs, if possible
- Approval of the ridgeline trail and swings
- Support for a boardwalk experience at the upper pond that is sensitive to the fact that the pond is inhabited by beaver and waterfowl
- Develop a trail system that is accessible by all mobility levels given the terrain

### Play:

- Preference for the idea of playful trails and dispersed play areas
- Support for the splash pad and playground to be adjacent to one another
- Support for buffering the sound from the basketball court and skate park
- Locate the skate spot in the inner park (away from neighbors) and consider placing it near the basketball court
- Make the skate spot mellow and friendly for all ages

### Transient camping:

- Remove the Schnabel House foundation
- Include covered picnic shelters
- Make more effort to discourage transient camping
- Consider the possibility of increased camping next to the picnic area, and make visibility and openness a goal to promote safety and discourage destructive behavior

### Other:

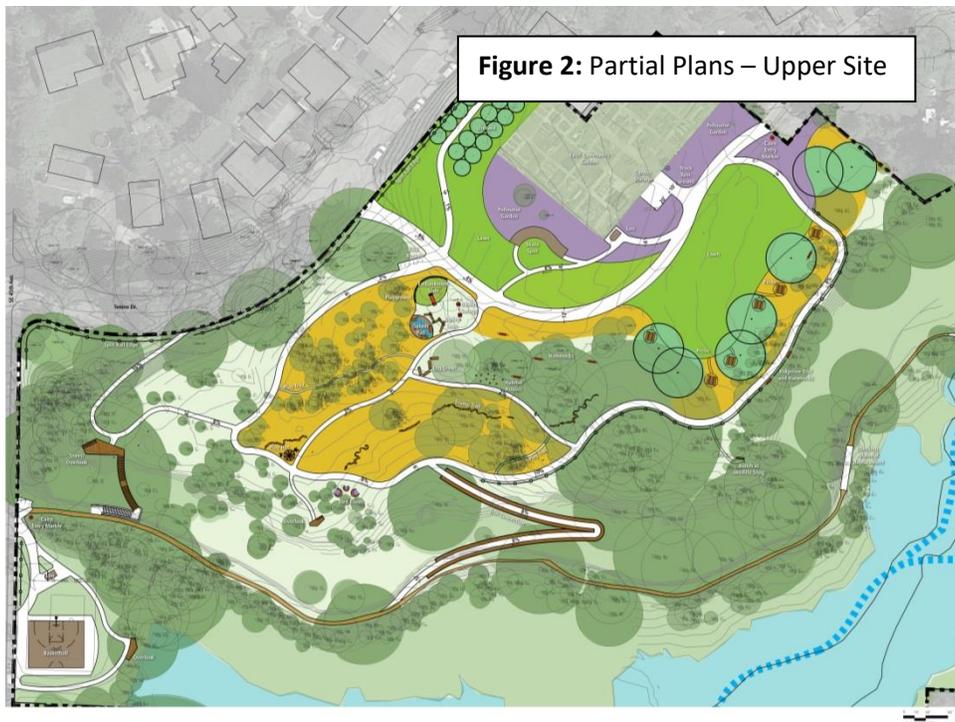
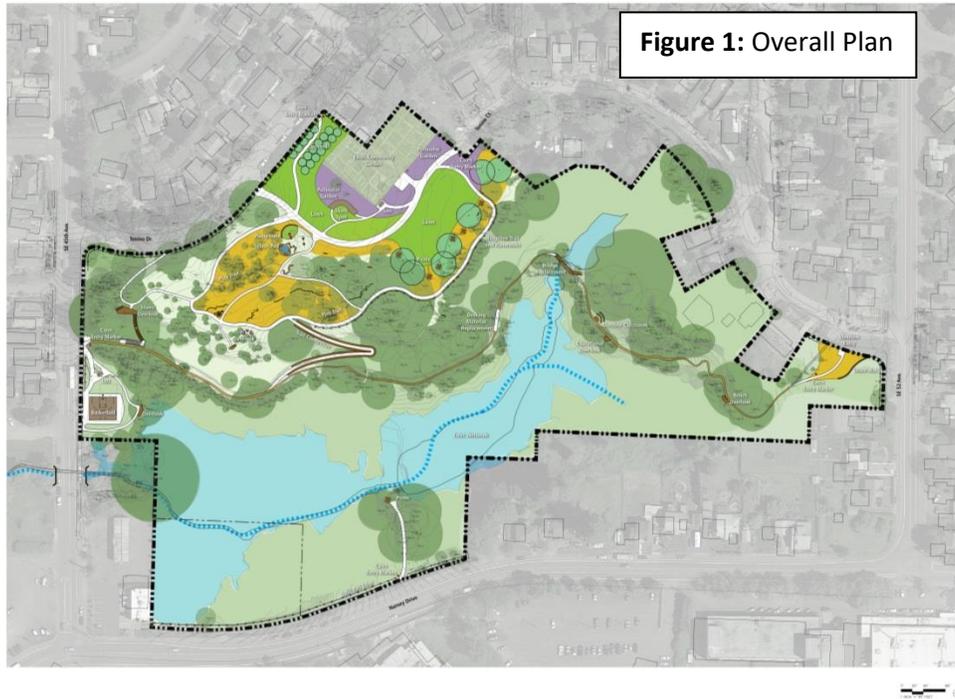
- Provide bike parking
- Ensure access to the community garden and create space for compost and mulch deliveries

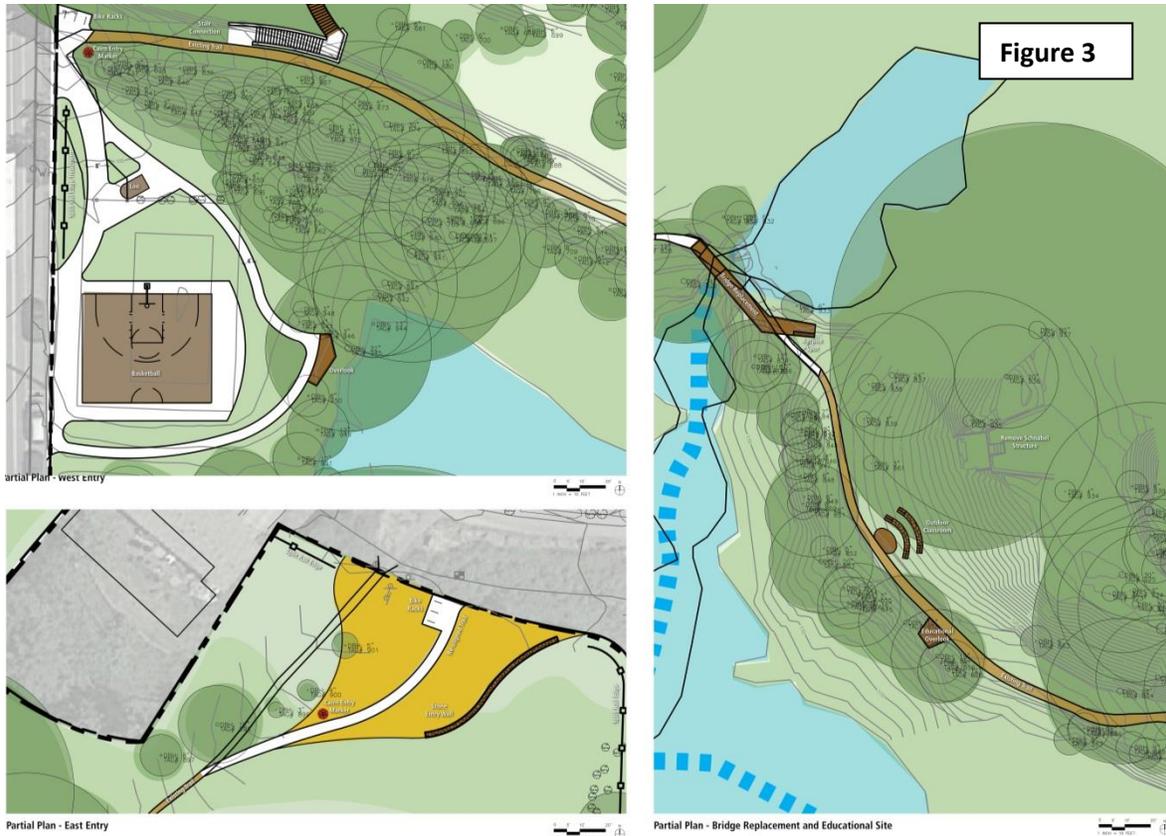
Following Ryan's presentation, the Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions and provide input:

- **What part of the Schnabel structure will remain, and what will be buried?** It will depend on whether the tree next to the structure will be saved. If the tree is saved, two walls will need to remain to keep it stable. If the tree is removed, the full structure can be completely removed.

## PREFERRED SITE PLAN PRESENTATION AND REVIEW

Ryan presented a series of map graphics illustrating the preferred site plan option based on the Committee’s feedback from the last meeting as shown in Figures 1, 2, and 3.





Below is a summary of Ryan's comments on the refined site plan option:

The design team has made efforts to minimize the impacts to the existing environment, specifically to trees, and the plans are explicit in only removing noxious or invasive trees which will allow for more sun to reach the oaks and other native plants and trees located in the park. A primary goal of the design team has been to eliminate or minimize the negative impacts to habitats in the park. An arborist walked through the park and determined that this plan is taking a very conservative approach and does have limited impacts to the environment.

The design team is also looking at adding bike parking and a series of staircases that lead from the lower to the upper park creating viewpoints and bird's eye looks at the park below.

The bridge has been moved since the last design – by not going through the pond, it will diminish the impact on the habitat.

The Schnabel structure will be removed and replaced with a small classroom along with a few additional structures for teachers to use with their students. In addition, there will be an outdoor education area that may have access to the water.



Emily Kuo, Mayer/Reed, discussed the issue surrounding the transient population within the park. She explained that they will be creating a series of trails and building fencing in certain areas which will provide cues that make it clear people care about the park, and may help discourage destructive behavior.

A spine trail will remain in the upper part of the park that will be used by bicycles and pedestrians. An ADA trail will loop through the park (play area, meadow, ridge, etc.) and provide an accessible way to explore the park. Additional trails will be connected to the ADA trail which will connect park users to the woodland and other experiences around the park.

The golden areas on the design maps indicate the meadows which will be grassy areas serving as home to native plants and will require little maintenance. The greener areas are entirely natural areas that will likely need no additional maintenance following initial cultivation.

The splash pad will be minimalistic in design, using natural materials and limiting the amount of water.

An orchard of to-be-determined trees along with a pollinator garden will be planted next to the community garden.

The design team is exploring the option of adding a skate run to the skate spot which will be more useful for children who are learning to skate.

There will be two Portland Loos, one located near the garden, and the other near the outdoor classroom.

Below is a summary of the Committee's discussion following initial review:

- **What does the brown around the "Trail Connection" indicate?**
  - *The geotechnical expert that accessed the site observed a high amount of fill material around the west side of the trail (including tires, debris, and trash), which has resulted in instability of the slope, as well as gradual sliding down the hill. The brown around the trail indicates the area that may require stabilization efforts. In addition, project staff had walked the site to determine the trail location and on behalf of accessibility had chosen to add a switchback rather than stairs.*
- **What materials will be used for ground cover on the trails? Will it be ADA friendly?**
  - *The design team is exploring the idea of gabion retaining walls along the trail due to the lowered disruption to the environment during installation, and because they allow for more flexibility as the trail settles. As for the surface, staff is still determining the best materials for creating a firm and ADA accessible trail.*
- **Is permeable paving an option for the surface of the trails?**



- *It's an option, but it is more expensive and due to the number of trails, it will be a matter of choosing which trails to pave.*
- **A Committee member requested analysis of any possible toxic waste or pollutants that may be in the park.** George committed to following up on this request.
- **What kind of fencing will be used?**
  - Ryan noted that this is part of what the Committee will be considering, but that the fencing will be wooden or rustic.
- **Has parking been addressed at the east entrance?**
  - The LID project will allow for street parking.
- **It's important to consider that the park serves as a beaver habitat which can be destructive to park amenities.**
- **What impact will the water levels have on the design?**
  - Parks will be required to get permits to work in high water zones, however, due to the stability at Errol Heights water levels are not expected to impact the design.
- **A member of the public expressed concern toward adding light to the lower portion of the park due to potential impacts to wildlife.**
  - George responded that lighting is important for park user safety. Lighting will not be included in the lower portion, just the upper portion of the park.

Following initial review, the Committee broke into two small groups to discuss the recommended design. Below is a summary of the themes that arose during the small group discussions:

- Overall the CAC was supportive of the design and felt it adequately reflected their feedback.
- It's important to make sure the design is durable and able to be maintained long term.
- Avoid fragmentation of the dispersed play area and habitat to minimize camping.
- Provide additional seating near the dispersed play area and in the picnic area and use natural materials for benches.
- Consider adding barbecues to the picnic area in high visibility spots that able to be reserved ahead of time, and make sure the picnic tables are high enough so they don't get flooded.
- Support for the location of the Portland Loo near the community garden, but it was suggested that design team consider moving it closer to the play area.
- Support for the location of the basketball court, but it was noted that the design team consider exploring ways to minimize the risk of balls rolling onto 45<sup>th</sup>.
- Consider maintenance costs and requirements of such a large pollinator garden. Would the Parks Department be able to coordinate or partner with another group or organization to assist with maintenance?
- The orchard will also require a significant amount of maintenance depending on the species of tree.
- The overlook outdoor classroom is great, but limit or discourage public access to the water.
- Consider adding hooks for hammocks and slacklines near the dispersed play area.

Below is a list of the Committee's key input that requires additional consideration:



- A Committee member expressed support for the first wooden fence option.
- Park structures need to be durable to promote long term maintenance and discourage vandalism.
- Use Westmoreland Park as inspiration for the play structures.

### **NEXT STEPS AND CLOSE**

Allison noted that the open house is taking place on December 1<sup>st</sup> and event information can be found online. She encouraged members to attend and promote the event. The focus group meeting will be discussing the play equipment and interpretive elements of the park. The next committee meeting will take place on January 9<sup>th</sup>. A committee member asked how they can stay informed on the project's progress. George explained that he will be meeting with the Committee at key project milestones to provide project information, and that the website will only have high level information.

Allison thanked the Committee and closed the meeting.