

# Washington Park Reservoir Improvements Project Community Sounding Board Meeting #3 Summary

August 20, 2013 6:00 to 8:00 pm First United Methodist Church 1838 SW Jefferson – Room 202

#### **CSB Members Present**

Bill Welch – Northwest District Association Terri Davis – Portland Parks & Recreation Nicolas Clark – Neighbors West Northwest Annie Mahoney – Historic Group Representative Dave Malcolm – Sylvan-Highlands NA

## CSB Members Absent

Charlie Clark –Northwest Heights NA Patty Gardner – Pearl District NA Chris Kent – Goose Hollow NA Eric Nagle – Arlington Heights NA

#### **Staff & Public Present**

Teresa Elliott, Portland Water Bureau
Tim Hall, Portland Water Bureau
Tom Carter, Portland Water Bureau
Jerry Moore, Portland Water Bureau
Dan Hogan, Portland Water Bureau
Marie Del Toro, Portland Water Bureau
Alan Peck, AECOM
Carmen Nale, AECOM
Marilee Hanks, AECOM
Rachel Hill, AECOM
Jeanne Lawson, JLA Public Involvement

Sam Beresky, JLA Public Involvement
Jamie Harvie, JLA Public Involvement
Kathryn Notson, Resident
Catherine Howells
Allan Classen, NW Examiner
Simon Jaworsky
Scott Fernandez, SE Resident
Eloise Eacles
Susan Peek
Matt Lewis
Bette Steflia

#### Welcome and Introductions

**Jeanne Lawson** welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Goals & Objectives and feedback from the community have been used by the design team to develop big picture draft concepts. The purpose of this meeting is to review and provide feedback on those big picture draft concepts.

#### *Meeting #2 Summary*

**Jeanne Lawson** asked for comments on the Community Sounding Board (CSB) meeting #2 summary. There were none.

#### **Tour**

The group discussed the reservoir tour that took place on August 10. CSB members felt that the tour was helpful to provide context. Jeanne said there is the possibility of another tour for those members that were unable to attend. She asked for any changes to the tour summary. It was pointed out that the date on the summary is incorrect, which will be corrected.

#### Goals & Objectives

**Jeanne Lawson** reviewed changes to the Goals & Objectives (handout). Based on feedback from the CSB, the wording around spending public funds has been changed and an educational component has been added around sustainability. Following feedback from the Historic Landmarks Commission, a specific reference to water has been added under "Park Experience."

#### Project update

**Teresa Elliott** provided a brief project update. Geotech drilling and surveying of the site has continued. The design team has continued to work on visible features designs and reviewed these multiple times with PWB. PWB has met with Japanese Gardens to discuss project overlaps; overlaps will be minimal. Japanese Garden construction will end by 2015, whereas Washington Park Reservoirs construction will begin in 2016. Both projects will do a tree survey and will share information. There may the possibility that the Washington Park Reservoir project can used excavated material from the Japanese Gardens.

### Reports from CSB members

**Jeanne Lawson** asked for any updates from CSB members. There were none.

## **Review Draft Concepts**

**Marilee Hanks** gave a PowerPoint presentation that included an overview of the process, existing conditions, big ideas for both reservoirs, and next steps (handout). She explained that the design team is at the stage of developing and sharing "big ideas." The internal team has been going through these together in order to screen them. She briefly reviewed the preliminary design team screening criteria:

- Project Construction Cost
- Operation & Maintenance Cost
- Volume & Pressure
- Operational Simplicity
- Reliability & Resiliency
- Permitability
- Constructability

Marilee said that parks in Portland have been designed to have individuality. The design team has tried to decide what it is about the Washington Park Reservoirs that will carry on. Some elements they have identified based on feedback, including topography, views, historic structures, and the desire for additional access.

#### Concepts Overview

In all concepts, drinking water is contained within a buried reservoir and any visible water is separate from the drinking water system.

There were two major concepts that have already been ruled out. First, building a surface water feature at the current surface water elevation, which would look similar to the current reservoirs but would greatly decrease the overall capacity of the system. Second, raising all the existing elements to a level above the buried reservoir, which would maintain a similar look but would be extremely costly. The design team also reviewed **Nicolas Clark**'s suggestion from the previous meeting and found it would be prohibitively expensive.

There were six concepts for Reservoir 3:

- Water Over the Divide: The intent is to recreate the original experience while accommodating the buried reservoir.
- In The Ravine: Naturalized topography with a gradual slope from the road and a smaller but still sizable reflection pool. Green space allows for many kinds of passive recreation.
- Landscaped Terraces: Celebrating the intent of the original water system and the reservoirs as a part of the water system. The line of the buried reservoir is very visible and used to define the edges of the spaces. There were three options for Landscaped Terraces:
  - o A: Green space at upper elevation and reflecting pool at current elevation.
  - o B: The opposite reflecting pool at upper elevation and green space at lower elevation.
  - C: Includes a large plaza next to gatehouse #3, while maintaining a reflecting pool and upper green terrace.
- Cascade: A terraced system of reflecting pools that works with the topography of the area. Emphasis on movement rather than a singular space for gathering.

There were four concepts for Reservoir 4, which were mostly based around the functions required of this area including de-chlorination, overflow, and stormwater facilities.

- Buried Facilities, Reflecting Pool: De-chlorination, overflow, and stormwater
  facilities are buried and covered with a reflecting pool. Water area is smaller than
  currently but historic features and feel are persevered. More green space than
  currently and opportunity for pedestrian/ADA access. Allows for views from above,
  which was identified by the Olmstead brothers as one of the unique features of the
  park.
- Buried Facilities, Lawn: De-chlorination, overflow, and stormwater facilities are buried and covered with a large multi-use green space.
- Open Basin, Habitat: Emphasis on habitat and stormwater wetland. Includes access into the area along a series of boardwalks.
- Open Basin, Lawn: An open basin with lawn that could be used as a recreational green space when it's not inundated with water. The area would be a bowl space that could accommodate flooding.

#### **Dot Exercise and Discussion**

**Jeanne Lawson** said the team would like feedback on the high-level design concepts. If there are some that the group does not see value in carrying forward, they would like that information. The design team's goal is to leave the *next* CSB meeting with no more than three or four to carry forward into detailed development.

Each CSB member placed one of three dot options next to each draft concept to indicate their feelings toward the proposed design:

- Green dots indicated an affinity to the design and a desire to refine it further.
- Orange dots indicated a feeling of caution about the design that would require discussion.
- Red dots indicated dislike of the concept and the desire to not carry that concept forward.

#### Reservoir 3 Concepts

Generally members preferred concepts with water against the dam and gatehouse, which they felt preserved the historic context. Also, they preferred a greater expanse of water to keep the feeling of tranquility and awe that the reservoirs currently inspire. It was suggested that pathways would provide a contemplative feeling better than large areas for

people to gather. There was a desire for a viewing platform that looked down over Reservoir 4. There was concern that PWB would require fencing and signage to control visitors' access to the water, which would interrupt the contemplative feeling, however the design team said there are many other methods to control visitor access.

#### Water Over the Divide - 4 green, 1 red

CSB members generally liked this concept, particularly the large expanse of water and the water coming up against the dam and gatehouse. A few members felt that the viewing platform was in the wrong location, as viewers would not be able to look down into Reservoir 4. Members suggested moving the line separating the two pools to be more similar to the Landscaped Terraces concepts, which would allow for better view corridors to the gatehouse and dam.

#### In The Ravine - 1 green, 2 orange, 2 red

Most CSB members, including the person who chose green, did not have strong opinions on this concept – though they generally thought there should be more water and less green space. None of the members felt strongly that this concept should be further refined.

#### Landscaped Terraces A - 1 green, 2 orange, 2 red

CSB members felt this concept did not include enough water, however they liked that water came up against the dam and gatehouse.

#### Landscaped Terraces B - 4 orange, 1 red

CSB members felt that this concept included too much green space, not enough water and lost the connection between the water and the gatehouse. However, they liked the fuller body of water. It was felt that this concept did not need to be pursued.

#### Landscaped Terraces C - 2 green, 3 red

CSB members felt that this concept included too much hardscape, too large of a grassy area, and lost the connection of the water to the gatehouse and the dam. Those that liked it referred to the ability to look down from Reservoir 3 over Reservoir 4. It was generally felt that an expansive viewing platform is not needed, though some pointed out the desire for wedding parties and other groups to use the area.

## Cascade - 4 green, 1 orange

CSB members generally liked this concept and would like to see it further developed. It was felt that this design presents many opportunities, including cascades, walking paths and the use of water for visual and aural stimulation.

#### Reservoir 4 Concepts

Members felt that including water was important. It was suggested that the view from Reservoir 3 would be better if Reservoir 4 included a large body of water.

#### Buried Facilities, Reflecting Pool - 4 green, 1 orange

There were no specific comments on this concept, though there was a general interest in carrying it forward for refinement.

#### Buried Facilities, Lawn - 2 green, 1 orange, 2 red

There were no specific comments on this concept, though there was a general interest in carrying it forward for refinement.

#### Open Basin, Habitat - 2 green, 3 orange

There were no specific comments on this concept, though there was a general interest in carrying it forward for refinement.

#### Open Basin, Lawn - 1 green, 1 red/orange, 3 red

It was felt that the inundation of the area would limit the possibility of a large expanse of maintained lawn, while the large open area would not allow for wildlife habitat or natural landscaping.

#### Discussion

Mostly the CSB members had a greater affinity with the concepts that included more water. Cascades and infinity pools were suggested. There was some concern about the maintenance required for large expanses of lawn.

Members wondered whether some of the Reservoir 3 and Reservoir 4 concepts were married together. The design team said that the designs are independent but some seem to naturally go together.

Discussion about specifics or further refinements to the designs was limited. The design team said the concepts presented are "big ideas" and could be refined and changed quite a bit.

Members were interested to know which designs may cost more than others. The design team responded that cost would depend on how the concept is refined and there is the opportunity within each concept for more or less expensive features.

The group discussed historic features. In all cases, the historic features will need to be removed and reconstructed. All Reservoir 3 concepts would maintain the gatehouse and dam. Some offer more opportunity for preserving parapet walls than others. All Reservoir 4 concepts would use historic features in a similar manner, maintaining the dam and gatehouse on the eastern side. It was pointed out that all designs are being done within the context of the Historic Commission and SHPO process.

Members asked whether access to the water is a possibility. The design team said that none of the options include wading or swimming pools and that access to the water would be limited.

Members asked whether the slopes leading down from the road to Reservoir 4 would be terraced or sloping. Design team members said the type of landscaping has not been decided. This area will rest on top of the moving landslide, but upland habitat would be possible.

The group discussed maintenance of the facility. The project team said that PWB plans to maintain whatever is built, including any public areas.

The group discussed timelines. The CSB will provide feedback on concepts again in September and then refined concepts will be presented to the Historic Landmarks Commission and the public in October. They hope to take two to four concepts to the public. By the end of October, the goal is to have settled on one concept for final refinement.

Members asked whether technical members of the project team will provide feedback on concepts. The design team said technical experts are reviewing designs as they are developed.

#### Bin

The group requested details of the alternative sites analysis. This information will be provided at a future meeting.

#### **Public comment**

**Bette Steflia** said she agrees with including water as a main feature of the design. The park currently has a lot of green space and lawn; water would provide a sense of relief. Maintaining the character of reservoirs and a sense of reflection is important and suitable for the area.

**Simon Jaworsky** spoke and provided written comment. He supports covering the reservoirs but would like the project to limit costs by focusing on functionality rather than aesthetics and public use.

The group discussed project cost. CSB members recommended that there should be a balance between cost and aesthetics. Project team members said the major cost is construction of necessary changes such as covering the reservoir and accommodating the landslide; the visible features will be a minor part of the project cost.

## Wrap up and next steps

The next CSB meeting will be Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup> in the same location. The project team will bring refined concepts and evaluations of the concepts. Evaluation criteria will be based on the goals and objectives.

Jeanne Lawson adjourned the meeting