



## Washington Park Reservoir Improvements Project Community Sounding Board Meeting #4 Summary

September 18, 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*  
Charlie Clark – *Northwest Heights NA*  
Chris Kent – *Goose Hollow NA*  
Annie Mahoney – *Historic Group Representative*  
Eric Nagle – *Arlington Heights NA*

### CSB Members Absent

Patty Gardner – *Pearl District NA*  
Dave Malcolm – *Sylvan-Highlands NA*

### Staff & Public Present

Teresa Elliott, *Portland Water Bureau*  
Tim Hall, *Portland Water Bureau*  
Tom Carter, *Portland Water Bureau*  
Jerry Moore, *Portland Water Bureau*  
Alan Peck, *AECOM*  
Carmen Nale, *AECOM*

Marilee Hanks, *AECOM*  
Jeanne Lawson, *JLA Public Involvement*  
Sam Beresky, *JLA Public Involvement*  
Sylvia Ciborowski, *JLA Public Involvement*  
Kathryn Notson, *Resident*

## Welcome and Introductions

**Jeanne Lawson** welcomed everyone to the meeting. She noted that the purpose of the meeting is to present the refined reservoir concepts and get feedback from Sounding Board members. At the next meeting, the group will discuss how well each of the concepts addresses the goals and objectives.

### *Meeting #3 Summary*

**Jeanne Lawson** asked for comments on the Community Sounding Board (CSB) meeting #3 summary. There were none.

### *Project Update*

**Teresa Elliott** provided a brief project update. The project team is currently putting together a packet of information for the October 14 Historic Landmarks Commission meeting which will review the Design Advice Request for alterations to Reservoirs 3 and 4. A report from this meeting will be distributed to CSB members.

The project team has also been studying what options are feasible for stormwater treatment and overflow at the reservoirs, as well as de-chlorination pits and sizing. Tim Hall

has been meeting with local neighborhoods. If any other neighborhoods should be included, members should inform the project team.

The project team is meeting with the Historic Resources Committee of the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects on September 20.

## **Review and Evaluate Reservoir Concepts**

**Marilee Hanks** gave a PowerPoint presentation that included an overview of the process, feedback from the Sounding Board on big ideas for both reservoirs, and review of the reservoir concepts.

### *Review of Process*

At the last Sounding Board meeting, members reviewed the reservoir design “big ideas.” The team has refined those big ideas into several concepts for Reservoirs 3 and 4, which will be presented today. Then, the concepts will be evaluated using the goals and objectives. In October the project will hold a second open house/online open house and outreach to neighborhoods, and will have a second meeting with the Historic Landmarks Commission.

### *Feedback from CSB Board on Big Ideas*

At the last meeting, members provided the following comments on the big ideas: the design should maximize the extent of visible water and maintain the existing water/gatehouse relationship; views from the Grand Staircase and Dam 3 are very important; and large lawns are not appropriate in low lying areas and require too much maintenance. The concepts have been refined with these points in mind.

### *Concepts Overview*

Six big ideas were presented for Reservoir 3 in the last meeting. Based on member feedback, the project team has chosen to move four concepts forward. For Reservoir 4, the four big ideas have been narrowed down to three concepts.

For each of the concepts, the Historic Landmarks Commission will consider how well the concept: 1) preserves historic elements, 2) avoids adding new elements that conflict with historic character, 3) avoids adding development that is out of scale, 4) avoids adding fake historic structures, and 5) includes new development that is compatible with its context.

### ***Reservoir 3 Concepts***

Marilee reviewed each of the Reservoir 3 concepts.

### Impact on historic features

The following historic impacts apply to all Reservoir 3 concepts:

- There will be some impact to the hillside and trees.
- The project team will take measures to preserve Gatehouse No. 3, the Weir Building and Dam No. 3. The Weir Building is “contributing” as a historic feature, which is why it is being preserved. The project team is beginning a discussion with the Historic Landmarks Commission design committee about what its actual use would be. Members noted that it does not seem to serve much of any purpose now, but perhaps could be used as a restroom.
- There will be an impact to the character-defining features of the gutter and walkway that surrounds the reservoir basin, as well as the Grand Staircase. The fence will be removed, and may be replaced if so desired.
- The reservoir basin will be removed in its entirety.

- The parapet wall will be removed. There is not an option to remove and reinstall it. However, in all options, the parapet wall and fence will be preserved along the dam.

### Water over the Divide Concept

This option includes two water surfaces; one pool at a higher elevation and one pool at a slightly lower elevation separated by a walkway. There is opportunity for a waterfall feature along the walkway that runs between the two pools. There is also an option to include terraced seating and viewing plazas along the walkway. The major features of this concept include:

- *Historic Features* – The extent of the water feature is similar to the footprint of the current reservoir, and preserves some of the relationship of the water with the gatehouse.
- *Sustainability* – The concept requires energy use for pumping and recirculation of water in the two expansive pools. The team is not sure yet if the water would be turned off in winter. The option has little habitat potential because of the small amount of green space. Whatever is done with lower pool will require higher maintenance because of the continuous landslide movement.
- *Circulation and Access* – There is ADA access along the lower pool, but not on stair cases around the upper pool. The concept includes viewing areas at Gatehouse No. 3 and the Grand Staircase. The reflecting pool would likely have a low seat wall or edge separating people from the water surface. The water surface would likely be 18-24” deep.

Committee members commented that something will need to be done to keep people out of the water, such as fencing. They were concerned about installation of a chain link fence or other unsightly structure for this purpose. Teresa noted that the Portland Water Bureau is discussing this issue. The assumption is that PWB will manage the area, not Portland Parks & Recreation. PWB is limited to what it can do because of the historic nature of the area and has no intention of putting up a chain link fence.

Committee members were also concerned about the location of ADA access points into the park. Currently, exterior pathways outside the park are in poor condition.

### In the Ravine Concept

The major features of this concept include:

- *Historic Features* – The form of the pool and the gently grading slopes make this concept feel the most similar to the current reservoir. However, the concept does not provide a water connection to Gatehouse No. 3. There is an opportunity to rebuild a portion of the wall and fence into the landscape.
- *Sustainability* – Because the reflecting pool has a water surface of only 1.5”-2”, it has a much lower demand on water resources than the Water over the Divide concept. It also does not require pumping. The option has more area for habitat creation and restoration.
- *Circulation and Access* – The walkways around the entire pool are ADA accessible. There are no stairs, which improves ADA accessibility but also means there are no viewing terraces. This option has more of an introspective, contemplative feel.
- *Cost* – This option is less expensive to maintain because no pumping is required. More money could be put into installation of a granite base, which would be cost-prohibitive for the other options. A granite base makes the water more reflective than using concrete.

Committee members were concerned about how the choice of vegetation would interact with the Gatehouse or affect views. Lawn seems like the best option to emulate water.

### Landscape Terraces Concept

The major features of this option include:

- *Historic Features* – The design fits within the historic park-like context. The forms are naturalistic, and there is an opportunity for a wall and ornamental fence to surround the water feature, which would maintain the feel of the current park.
- *Sustainability* – The option has more opportunity for habitat restoration. The smaller pool area does not require pumping.
- *Circulation and Access* – The entire park would be ADA accessible. The option provides varied experiences along the pathways, as visitors can move along terraces from greenery to water. There could be some lawn area intermixed with habitat.

### Cascade Concept

The major features of this option include:

- *Historic Features* – This option has a nice emphasis on water under the influence of gravity.
- *Sustainability* – This option has a larger water surface and requires intensive pumping, which will require a greater amount of water resources demand. There is not much opportunity for habitat restoration.
- *Circulation and Access* – The park experience would be very similar to the current experience. There is one main walkway around entire pool, with some stairs. There is ADA access around the water feature. The waterfalls themselves would likely be constructed of granite, but the rest of the pool would not have a granite basin.

### Committee Discussion

Committee members had questions about the cost for each concept. Staff responded that in terms of construction costs, the Landscape Terraces concept is the most expensive due to fence installation. In the Ravine is least expensive. For operations and maintenance, the Water over the Divide and Cascade concepts are most expensive, and In the Ravine is least expensive.

Staff is still refining the costs, and current figures are very high level. As designs change, costs may change dramatically. Operations and maintenance typically costs 5% of capital costs per year.

Members also asked about the role of the Historic Landmarks Commission. **Tom Carter** responded that the commission will evaluate the Community Sounding Board and project team's proposed concept against the approval criteria. They may make suggestions on ways to modify the proposal so that it better meets the criteria. However, they cannot arbitrarily reject a concept. Among the goals and objectives, the "respect historic resources" goal will be most important to the Historic Panel.

### ***Reservoir 4 Concepts***

#### Impact on historic features (all options)

The following historic impacts apply to all Reservoir 4 concepts:

- The landslide slope will be filled and re-graded.
- Gatehouse No. 4 and Dam No. 4 will not be impacted. The perimeter wall will likely be impacted, though there may be an option to re-install part of it.
- The reservoir basin and stone retaining wall will be removed.

### Reflecting Pool Concept

This concept includes an 18-24" deep pool with parapet wall. The major features of this option include:

- *Historic Features* – This option retains the original character of the reservoir with relation to Gatehouse No. 4 and Dam No. 4. The water features follows a naturalistic form and broad curves, which is similar in terms of character to the original reservoir.
- *Sustainability* – The very large body of water requires some water treatment and circulation. There is opportunity for habitat restoration.
- *Circulation and Access* – This option allows for lots of views in the habitat area. The walkways around the pool are ADA accessible, but the path through the habitat area is too steep for ADA access.

#### Activity Lawn Concept

This concept has no water feature. It includes lawn for passive activities like sunbathing and picnicking. The major features of this option include:

- *Historic Features* – This option follows the original reservoir form, but with no water feature.
- *Sustainability* – This option requires more intensive maintenance, care, and mowing. It allows opportunity for habitat restoration (similar to Reflecting Pool concept).
- *Circulation and Access* – Similar to the experience of the Reflecting Pool.

#### Lowland Habitat

This concept provides stormwater treatment, and would act as a seasonal wetland. It provides a strong functional need for the site. The major features of this option include:

- *Sustainability* – This option has strong merit in terms of stormwater treatment. It also has potential for lowland habitat.
- *Circulation and Access* – Similar to the experience of the Reflecting Pool. There is some opportunity to bring boardwalks into the lowland habitat.

#### Committee Discussion

Members asked if there would be any new paths coming into the Reservoir 4 area from Sherwood Road in the west to serve Arlington Heights residents. Marilee responded that, because of the sensitivity of the landslide, the team is trying to avoid non-essential construction. The main access would be a path from Reservoir 3 with an opportunity to connect in from the current maintenance access road. There is a low ravine along the area and the team is exploring options for access from there.

Members asked about the cost of these options. In terms of construction costs, the Lowland Habitat concept is most expensive because of the cost of boardwalks. The Activity Lawn concept is the least expensive. For operations and maintenance, the Reflective Pool is most expensive; and the Activity Lawn and Lowland Habitat concepts are similar in cost. One member suggested solar panels on top of gate houses to help with cost.

Members requested to see the range of costs for each concept for the next meeting, since cost is a key factor in deciding which concept is preferred.

### **Committee Feedback**

Members were asked to provide brief feedback on the concepts, including the strengths and weaknesses of each in terms of how well they meet the goals and objectives.

#### Reservoir 3

Overall, members liked the Cascade and Landscape Terraces concepts most. Their comments on the concepts include:

- Water over the Divide
  - The opportunity to interact with water via the walkway is appealing.
  - Concern about ADA accessibility to upper pathways.
- In the Ravine
  - Like that this is low-cost and has a lower liability issue.
  - Like the elegant reflecting pool.
  - Don't like that this option limits the user experience.
  - Could this option be combined with aspects of the Landscape Terraces?
  - Reduces concern about skateboarders on ledges around the pool.
- Landscape Terraces
  - Like the option of putting back most of the fence.
  - Like that this provides a varied experience and public interaction beyond just a water feature. It provides a balance of experiences.
  - Like that this provides crowd control around the water.
  - Like that this provides the same visual effect around the dam.
- Cascade
  - This option is beautiful and preserves the current visual experience of reservoir.

#### Reservoir 4

Overall, members liked the Lowland Habitat option best, with the Reflecting Pool as a second choice. Their comments on the concepts include:

- Reflecting Pool
  - Seems redundant with the water features considered for Reservoir 3.
  - Like that this option corresponds with the current experience.
- Activity Lawn
  - More lawn is not needed in Washington Park.
  - Lawn is valuable here, particularly if there is no lawn in Reservoir 3.
- Lowland Habitat
  - This option is preferred as a way to restore the lost lowland habitat in Portland.
  - Like that this option provides stormwater treatment opportunities.

### **Public comment**

**Kathryn Notson** said that she enjoyed the committee discussion and the effort to create well-designed concepts that go beyond concrete lids. The chosen concept will be an iconic design that no other city will have, and could even win a design award. She hopes that committee members stay committed to very end. She said she likes all of the Reservoir 3 options except for Landscape Terraces, which seems too busy. She hopes that all of the documents become public, and that committee members attend the Open House.

### **Wrap up and next steps**

Each member received an evaluation chart. Members were asked to please indicate their thoughts about each option on the chart as homework, and come to the next meeting ready to discuss. If possible, they should send the chart to staff prior to the meeting to be used as a discussion draft. Staff will send members an electronic version of the chart, as well as a copy of the PowerPoint presentation.

The next CSB meeting will be held on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The project team will review the evaluation of the reservoir concepts. A public open house will be held on October 16<sup>th</sup> at the Zion Lutheran Church and all members are encouraged to attend.

**Jeanne Lawson** adjourned the meeting.