

Waterfront Park, Ankeny Plaza & Street Improvements Project Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

April 25, 2007, 4:00 – 6:30 pm
Portland Development Commission
222 NW Fifth Avenue, Portland

Attendance

PAC members present

John Beardsley	Beardsley Development
Harriet Cormack	Waterfront Park Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee
Carol Edelman	Waterfront Park Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee
Lou Elliot	Bill Naito Corp.
Daniel Friedman	Downtown Neighborhood Association (for absent Jennifer Geske)
Jerry Marshall	Portland Rescue Mission
Chet Orloff	Portland Parks Board, Historic Resources
Henry Sakamoto	Oregon Nikkei Endowment
Louis Wachsmuth	Dan & Louis Oyster Bar
Terri Warpinski	University of Oregon

PAC members absent

Jennifer Geske	Downtown Neighborhood Association
Patrick Gortmaker	Kalberer Company, OTCT Neighborhood Association
Carly Riter	Portland Business Alliance

Project team

Shelby Acteson	Portland Development Commission (PDC)
Janet Bebb	Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R)
Kevin Brake	Portland Development Commission
Sandra Burtzos	Portland Parks and Recreation
Chelsea Cochran	Walker Macy (consultant landscape architect)
Peter Englander	Portland Development Commission
Barbara Hart	EnviroIssues (consultant facilitator)
Joleen Jensen-Classen	Portland Development Commission
Doug Macy	Walker Macy (consultant landscape architect)
Ross Plambeck	Portland Development Commission
Mauricio Villarreal	Walker Macy (consultant landscape architect)
Bob Thompson	TVA Architects (consultant architect)

Audience members present

Jon Abrahamson, owner of Captain Ankeny's Well	Sally Noble, Central City Concern
Lou Bowers, Portland Development Commission	L. Norton
Kristen Calhoun, RACC	Jason Roberts, Ankrom Moisan Architects
Pete Eggspuehler, Beam Development	Paul Verhoeven, executive director, Portland Saturday Market
Lisa Hamel, International Market	Micah J. Waldstein
Charles Houtchens, Portland Saturday Market	Rhia Weinhaus, Portland Saturday Market
Carl Larson, Portland CarFree Alliance	Paul Tweten, Tweten Photography, vendor
Judy Murase of Murase Associates	
Anne Naito Campbell, Bill Naito Co.	

Welcome and introductions

Facilitator Barbara Hart welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC). She asked participants in the audience to raise their hand or complete a comment card if they would like to make a comment during the course of the meeting.

April 4 Meeting Summary

Barbara asked for changes, additions, edits to the April 4 PAC meeting summary. No changes were suggested and the meeting summary was approved by the PAC.

Ground Rules

Barbara asked PAC members for any questions, additions, or changes concerning the PAC ground rules. No suggestions were offered by PAC members.

Goals and Objectives

Janet Bebb introduced the concept of a set of goals and objectives for the project. She explained that Carol Edelman and Harriet Cormack suggested that the PAC identify and review project goals and objectives to assist with project planning and ensure a process that addresses the PAC's overall concerns and interests. PAC members identified the following project goals:

- Strong linkages between downtown to Waterfront Park and the Willamette River
- Implement and respect previous plans
- Develop a high quality Phase 1 approach
- Create a dynamic area
- Develop a regional attraction
- Support economic vitality
- Create a distinct pedestrian environment
- Ensure an effective crossing of Naito Parkway
- Create connections through the area under the Burnside Bridge and MAX station
- Support existing populations and users
- Create a home for Portland Saturday Market
- Create a space that supports activities and street life throughout the week and year-round
- Ensure 24-hour accessibility, security, and safety
- Keep linear theme and holistic view of Waterfront Park in mind

Kevin Brake commented that a broad range of bureau representatives and service providers have come together to discuss a framework for maintenance and security in the Waterfront-Ankeny area. The purpose of the group's work is to create a management authority to maintain the area (similar to the authority managing Pioneer Courthouse Square). It is likely that many of these goals and issues identified by the PAC will be discussed in this forum.

Design Concepts

Background

(Mauricio Villarreal, Walker Macy)

Mauricio Villarreal introduced the three preliminary design concepts. He described the project area and sites, consisting of Waterfront Park, the underside of the Burnside Bridge, Ankeny Plaza, Ankeny Street extending to the west from the Plaza, and 1st Avenue extending both north and south from the Plaza. The design considerations for these concepts include the following:

- Embrace Art & History
- Revitalize District Character
- Establish Iconic Identity
- Integrate Multi-Modal Transportation
- Create Illumination Strategy
- Generate Activity and Mix of Uses
- Endorse Sustainability
- Promote Livability and Safety

In addition, other input was received at the Saturday Market booth for Open House #1. Goals suggested at this event included the following:

- Storage
- Wind Protection
- Transparent cover to protect from rain and allow for natural light – covering customers is most important
- Color and vibrancy in shelters and design
- Nice paving- level and well drained
- Phone lines, power
- Restrooms
- Capacity for other events- concerts, markets, festivals
- Unloading/loading area- access for vendors
- A clean, safe, exciting place for vendors and customers

Design Concept Overview

(Bob Thompson, TVA Architects and Doug Macy, Walker Macy)

Bob Thompson and Doug Macy described each of the three design options developed for PAC consideration. There are several features that are present within each of the design options. Each of the designs seeks to improve street and pedestrian surfaces, create an effective crossing between Ankeny Plaza and Waterfront Park, and provide a distinct space for Saturday Market. Each of these designs assumes the market occupying space in both Ankeny Plaza and Waterfront Park. The market's activity in Waterfront Park is located upon an expansive, level concrete platform, flush with the elevation under the bridge and elevated above the plaza at the Ankeny Street crossing. Steps and ramps lead users to the platform, which is four feet above grade at the south end, helping to create separation and containment from the park. The various design options employ different structures to create cover for the market booths. For each of the design options, covered booths within Ankeny Plaza would utilize a system of four tents that are removed during the week. In addition, each of the options keep the Esplanade and market separate, so that individual users of these features can pass through these spaces independently.

The concept for under the Burnside Bridge is not yet complete, but will include improvements to illumination in the area as well as moving TriMet fixtures in-line with the existing columns to reduce visual clutter. A potential translucent barrier between the existing station walkway and parking lot under the bridge could function as a piece of artwork.

In addition, Walker Macy suggested that the space on the south end of Ankeny Plaza that currently hosts a wall with artifacts creates a negative edge, and would be a good candidate for a retail space.

A copy of the presentation will be posted on the project website:
<http://www.portlandonline.com/parks/index.cfm?c=44473>

Option A

Option A emphasizes Waterfront Park and Ankeny Plaza as separate spaces, with connections between the two.

The primary concept for Ankeny Plaza is a well developed plaza with cobblestones that extend westward from the Skidmore Fountain along Ankeny St. This cobblestone theme creates a link back into the neighborhood. The crossing at Naito Parkway would be in its existing location, also using cobblestones. There is an opportunity to create a green street for stormwater management between Davis and Couch streets. Similarly, Ankeny St. could be outfitted with pervious pavers that allow stormwater to infiltrate into the ground. Ankeny St. would use a curbless-style street that is either completely pedestrian, or with separate pedestrian and auto zones.

In Waterfront Park, a water feature would sit between the south end of the market platform within a circular amphitheater-like space. The character of this water feature has not yet been developed. The steps of the amphitheater area could be like those found in Pioneer Square.

Option A's market platform would be fairly narrow and would not affect the existing pumphouse area. The covered vending area would consist of a series of columns with attached canopies. An adjacent row of trees on the platform would provide additional canopy-like cover and create a layered effect as one moved towards the water. The three large oak trees by the pump station would not be removed under this option.

Option A provides for 264 total vending booths, 149 of which are covered. Ankeny Plaza would host 98 booths (30 covered), and Waterfront Park would host the remaining 166 (119 covered).

Option B

Option B is simpler in its design and attempts to make a stronger tie between Ankeny Plaza and Waterfront Park. As with Option A, the Ankeny walkway would receive surface upgrades that could include permeable pavement. A single driving lane would be accommodated on Ankeny to make more room for pedestrians. Sidewalk upgrades throughout the project area would improve the pedestrian experience. Different patterns and colors of pavers, stone, and/or concrete can be used to create a curbed or curbless street surface. Option B would feature an expansive direct plaza that flows across Naito Parkway into the Waterfront Park.

The elevated market platform would also be present in Option B, but utility vaults would be moved below grade and the oak trees just west of the pump station removed to allow the platform to be wider. The roof structure for the Market would be colorful and kinetic. A covered area 60 ft. wide would be created by a series of "blades" attached to rows of vertical columns. These blades could be moved into a vertical position when the market is not in session to allow weather into the area.

Another concept for the platform when the market is not in session is to have it transform into a reflecting pool. If the platform were slightly graded and or had a short curb along its perimeter, the area could be flooded by a shallow layer of water. When the market is in session, this water can be drained into an underground storage tank.

Option B provides for 244 total vending booths, 148 of which are covered. Ankeny Plaza would host 94 booths (28 covered), and Waterfront Park would host the remaining 150 booths (120 covered).

Option C

Option C would create a more dramatic link between the waterfront and surrounding neighborhood by extending a paved walkway from Skidmore Fountain both westward along Ankeny St., as well as using that same paved surface throughout Ankeny Plaza, across Naito Parkway, and into Waterfront Park to the pier. This continuity of surface helps create a strong visual connection.

Option C would keep autos on Ankeny St., but with an improved surface, similar to the alternatives described for Option B where pedestrian zone is defined with either a flush or raised curb. As with Options A and B, pervious pavement could be used to provide stormwater management benefits. A lighting system would also be added to the streetscape.

In Waterfront Park, an amphitheater would sit at the south end of the area, across from the Market platform. An interactive fountain would be featured here at street level, about 4 feet below the platform.

The market area itself would be covered with a simple concrete structure that also allows abundant light to enter. With the amphitheater at its south end, this platform and concrete frame could be used as a stage, allowing the space to be programmed for additional uses.

The total booth count for Option C is 268, with 148 covered. Ankeny Plaza would host 97 booths (30 covered) and Waterfront Park would have 148 booths (120 covered).

Consideration of Design Concepts

Barbara explained that the purpose of this discussion is for individuals to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the designs. The design team will use this feedback and that gathered from the public to refine and strengthen the concepts. The next phase of the work will also look at the cost estimates for the various options. A public open house is planned for May 9 to share these three design concepts and hear from the community. A report on the results of this event will be available at the next PAC meeting.

Janet Bebb commented that Walker Macy was charged with designing these concepts holistically. She reminded attendees that not all elements of the design will be provided by the budget available for this project. Kevin Brake added that PDC will be considering the possibility of a local improvement district for Ankeny Street to help fund construction and maintenance of the area.

General Comments

Automobile Access on Ankeny St.

John Beardsley advocated for eliminating automobile access on Ankeny St. He commented that providing space for automobile traffic on Ankeny frustrates the flexibility of the design concepts. For example, if you do not have to account for automobile access between 1st Ave and Naito Parkway, the design could approach to the river with more available land.

Chet Orloff observed that the issue of automobile access on Ankeny St. is a priority and will require clarity before the group can move forward with selecting a design. Janet Bebb replied that property owner concerns and emergency access are related issues that will need to be addressed. She added that the City project team will investigate further into this option in an attempt to move it forward.

Audience member Carl Larsen commented that his organization, CarFree Portland, supports closing Ankeny Street permanently between 2nd Ave. and 3rd Ave. He read a petition initiated by the organization proposing this concept.

Audience member Cathy Cook of Mercy Corps commented that their organization is interested in discussing the possibility of vehicle access between 1st Ave. and Naito Parkway with John Beardsley and other proponents of eliminating vehicle traffic on Ankeny St. Mercy Corps anticipates a need for access to their center.

Pump Station

Chet Orloff and Lou Elliot both commented on their interest in enhancing the pump station buildings and making them a prominent feature of the refined design.

Platform and Covered Area for Market

Several members expressed concern that a permanent cover for the market platform would encourage loitering and supported design concepts that would eliminate that attraction, such as movable cover or a water feature. Members also expressed similar concerns about the remaining covered area underneath the Burnside Bridge.

Bob Thompson responded that issues of cost come into play with the different degrees of cover. For example, there are some mechanical challenges associated with the kinetic option that may drive up costs. Walker Macy is just now starting to consider other possibilities, such as the reflection pool, as well as design of the platform for other uses. He reassured the group that they understand the issues and this input will be helpful in guiding the second round of design.

Members discussed booths for Saturday Market. Lou Elliot expressed his concern that many of the booths within the concepts are not covered. Audience participant Paul Verhoeven of Saturday Market commented that his organization had hoped to achieve at least 140 contiguous booths, the number they had prior to losing space under the Burnside Bridge. In addition, Paul commented that it has been their experience that single-loaded aisles do not function well and tend to wither compared to the double-loaded aisles. A Saturday Market vendor in the audience commented 8x10 foot booths are awkward for vendors and that a square space is generally

better. Chelsea Cochran of Walker Macy replied that most booths are 8x8 and 10x10, but that there were a few tight spots where 8'x10' booths were used.

Paul Verhoeven asked if the Market platform could be lowered by 18 inches, or so. Doug Macy replied that this can be looked at, but that the elevation of the market was utilized to create separation from the park and to blend the elevations in with the Big Pipe project vaults, and that he would not recommend a traditional plaza form. Janet Bebb added that the idea of elevating the market space is not only an architectural concept, but is also a grading requirement of the space.

Project Costs

Lou Elliot commented that the designs appear to represent features that could not be supported by the available project budget. Jason Roberts, an audience member, suggested that an emphasis on simple geometries within the design will help the project spend less on materials.

Connection between Ankeny and Waterfront

Lou Elliot commented that there are inadequate connections between the Saturday Market and Waterfront Park and that bridging Naito Parkway and a broad crossing were two elements that the group talked about early on. He supported the options that included strong visual connections through a consistent paved surface. Several other members and audience participants also supported the strong pavement concept.

Lou also expressed concern about the continuity and connectivity of Waterfront Park and commerce at the market. Paul Verhoeven added his concern that shoppers will not go back and forth between two market locations and that this will cause the Ankeny Plaza portion of the market to fail.

Jason Roberts commented that the net effect of maintaining the axial nature of the connection between the Plaza and Park is to isolate the north and south ends of the park. He suggested that simple design will help to maintain a balance between the north-south and east-west connections.

Pedestrian Access to/from MAX Station and Surrounding District

Lou Elliot expressed his concern about connections between the MAX station, Waterfront Park, and the rest of the district. He commented that by placing a barrier wall at the MAX station in front of the parking lot, foot traffic would be forced either north or south. The design needs to ensure good access to the station from all sides. Doug Macy replied that a scramble system with another signal at the north end of the market is a solution to this problem. In addition to the Ankeny Plaza connection between the two spaces, a city sidewalk extends from the station walkway to Naito Parkway along the south side of the Burnside Bridge.

The parking lot under the Burnside Bridge will remain to serve weekend and evening parking needs within the district. Mauricio Villarreal commented that there is a need to balance the demands for vehicle parking and pedestrian movement. Audience member Lisa Hamel commented that a sidewalk will help deter pedestrians from walking through the parking lot to access Waterfront Park.

Terri Warpinski commented that the University of Oregon and the White Stag buildings need adequate delivery access. While that issue has been resolved, there is still a need to maintain

good pedestrian access. She added that they would like to find a solution that does not force pedestrians to walk along the service access to the University's building.

Public Restroom

Audience member Sally Noble of Central City Concern commented about the issue of public restrooms. Their organization has a lot of interest in this matter and is pleased to see that restrooms are part of the design options. Their Public Restroom Implementation Team is interested in recommending that Central City Concern staff an attendant at this restroom.

Navy Ships

PAC members discussed the potential impacts of the security boundary for Navy ships that dock at Waterfront Park piers during the Rose Festival. Sandra Burtzos reported that the current commander had been a good partner and had minimized the security perimeter around the ships. He is retiring and a new commander may have a different approach to security issues.

Comments on Option A:

PAC members and audience participants made specific comments about design Option A.

Chet Orloff asked if there is any obstruction from the tree canopy on the Market platform as you are looking out towards at the river. Bob Thompson answered that there will be clear view to the river as the canopy will be up 15 feet, or so.

Several PAC and audience members supported the circular space at the south end of the market platform. Terri Warpinski commented that this will serve as a good gathering space and strong attribute to the overall design. Jerry Marshall also liked the amphitheater concept. Audience member Rhia Weinhaus supported this concept for its ability to host other events besides the Saturday Market.

Jerry Marshall asked if Option A creates better in access to the river than the other design options. Doug Macy responded that the asymmetrical design of Option A provides the most accommodating space for events, but all have equal ability for pier or floating dock.

Comments on Option B:

PAC Members and audience participants made specific comments about design Option B.

Several PAC members were interested in the proposed reflecting pool water feature. Jerry Marshall supported the concept, saying that it had a "big city" look and feel. In addition, he supported its function as a loitering deterrent. Sandra Burtzos expressed concern that a reflecting pool may not meet the requirements for an interactive water feature. Doug Macy responded that the water element in the lower plaza area would be interactive. John Beardsley and Lou Elliot also supported the concept. Paul Verhoeven asked for clarification about the slope and/or edge needed for a reflecting pool. Too extreme of a slope or a trip-edge, he said, would make this concept undesirable from the Market's point of view. In addition, members were interested in learning how a reflecting pool would function under a cover. Mauricio Villarreal responded that the slope will be 2-3%, no more than what is found on an average city sidewalk. This is at a general concept stage and Walker Macy will be working to further clarify the details.

Chet Orloff commented that Option B is advantageous because it creates architectural elements that students can study. In addition, the pump house building may be a structure of interest to students of architecture, and should be highlighted within the design. Chet also expressed concern for architectural supervision of the construction of the design. He gave the example of cracking concrete benches at Seattle's Olympic Sculpture Park as something the City does not want to experience. He spoke to his concerns about the durability of a canopy structure and the need to build things to last in this historic district.

PAC members discussed the removal of the three oak trees presented as part of Option B and C. Harriet Cormack commented that the Waterfront Park Master Plan speaks to the preservation of large trees. Doug Macy offered that each of the designs can be accommodating of the existing trees, but it may require changes to the market space size, capacity, etc.

Comments on Option C:

PAC members and audience participants made specific comments on Option C.

Lou Elliot commented that he supports the strong visual connection between the plaza and park across Naito Parkway, moving the bathroom adjacent to the fire station, and the fact that the market platform is further to the south.

Harriet Cormack echoed her support for the strong connection between neighborhood and the market, as well as the extension over Willamette River. She expressed concern about the concrete overhead structure, suggesting that it is likely to become a magnet for graffiti. Jerry Marshall was also concerned about graffiti.

John Beardsley offered an idea to approach Waterfront Park at an angle along Ankeny St. This would create an interesting connection between the two spaces that is not parallel. Walker Macy will look at this option, but raised the concern of tree removal required in Ankeny Plaza to make this feasible.

An unidentified member of the audience suggested a permanent covered walkway that incorporates some of the old cast iron fixtures stored by the City of Portland.

Audience member Chad Larsen asked about the stairs that lead from the MAX station up to the Burnside Bridge. Mauricio responded that Walker Macy has not yet looked at this element, but this does not mean they will be removed.

Audience Member Kristen Calhoun commented on the public art piece in the project area at Waterfront Park and that it should either be kept in-place or relocated within the project. Doug Macy affirmed the intent to relocate it within the project.

Wrap up and next steps

The second Open House will be held on Wednesday, May 9 to present and receive additional public comment on these schematic designs. These comments, along with those gathered from today's PAC meeting, will be considered during the next phase of designs. Walker Macy will present its refined design options to the PAC at their May meeting.

Next meeting

May 23, 2007, 4:00 – 6:00 pm.