

## **EWEB Riverfront Master Plan Community Advisory Team (CAT)**

Wednesday, March 10, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

EWEB Board Room

Present: Dave Hauser, Tom Hoyt, Mark Johnson, Pat Johnston, Desiree Moore, Mary Unruh, Anita Van Asperdt, and Gary Wildish, members; Bob Cassidy, EWEB Commissioner; Mark Oberle and Jeannine Parisi, EWEB staff; Greg Brokaw, Kaarin Knudson, Lorri Nelson and John Rowell, Rowell Brokaw Architects; Julie Fischer, T'NT Consultants; Nan Laurence, City of Eugene; Aryana Ferguson, Madrona Consulting; Vicki Maxon, Recorder; Charles Biggs, Bob Hart, Kevin Matthews, Ginger Newman, Tom Snyder, and David Sonnichsen, public.

Absent: Dean Pape', member.

### 1. Welcome and Agenda Review

Dave Hauser welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda.

### 2. Minutes Approval

Anita Van Asperdt asked that the February 24 minutes be revised to state that she asked for a response to Hugh Pritchard's concerns, not Kevin Matthews' concerns.

The February 24 minutes were approved with the above revision.

### 3. Comments from Audience/CAT Comment

Charles Biggs said he attended the March 3 public meeting and that he was concerned that the clicker questions were slightly biased, for example, using the word "yuck" for one of the answer choices. He asked the CAT to develop a 20-year plan to make certain the public knows how much teeth the plan will have, the guidelines for development, and that it will be set in concrete. He added that he would also like to advocate that the district become sustainable or green wherein all development, either in construction or use, is green or environmentally sensitive or local, so that the public can feel good about it if it doesn't go into public hands. He reiterated that he is advocating for additional access to the park from across the river (via a bridge). He said he realizes that there is no money for it, but that greater access for parks and rivers is essential.

Tom Snyder said that bottom line, as he looks around the country and sees how many cities have celebrated their old industrial downtowns in projects that celebrate their history, and have retained these places as public ownership, he is disappointed that nobody in the CAT has talked about how to make that happen. He said he isn't sure who they should be talking to (money managers, grant writers or who), but he would like to see the CAT encourage that as one of the strategies being contemplated. He said he feels that everything that has been contemplated thus far is trying to prepare this space for development by someone who has different visions from the CAT. He challenged the CAT to come up with something that will provide them with motivation to carry this to the next step, whatever that is, and that he is hopeful that the people of Eugene will be able to see benefit in some focus that would let everybody in Eugene be proud of this space. He added that so far, miles of condos don't do it for him, and then thanked the CAT and wished them good luck.

Bob Hart asked if the CAT had received his e-mail (they did) and noted that he doesn't feel they have dealt with the transmission line and tower issues, and that the artistic rendering doesn't show that. He said that those will still be there and that the CAT needs to grapple with it. He added that he was upset about the mention of an 11-story tower and is certainly more upset about a 20-story tower. He closed by saying that he suspects that the representation the CAT received at the March 3 public meeting is not representative of how the community will react, and used the example of Ya-Po-Ah terrace being outlandish and out of scale.

Mark Oberle noted that public vs. private ownership is not a piece of the CAT's work but rather that will be up to the EWEB Board, and the City Council will have some say as well. He noted that the CAT will keep flexibility in mind and that the plan could support either public or private (or both) ownership.

### 3. Debrief March 3 Public Meeting/Update on Public Involvement/MOU Map

Julie Fischer thanked everyone for their participation in and attendance at the public meeting. She said it was amazingly well-attended and that she wanted to get some feedback from the CAT. A brief summary of CAT comments follows:

- Impressed with positive energy, level of knowledge from attendees, and attendees' comments during discussion
- Happy to see such broad support for plan even though there is still some change desired
- Clicker questions – thought “yuck” answer choice was inappropriate (two comments)
- Landscape references need more work and more examples to elicit true responses – different questions may have been more valuable
- Amazing turnout – so much interest
- Height preference photos – density of 120' buildings seems too much – audience confusion about what local buildings were represented at 120' height (i.e., US Bank building downtown)
- Concern voiced about 120' building shading restaurant row seemed like an important consideration - question how to respond to audience preference for grassy areas – seems like a given that people generally prefer traditional park landscape
- Had the pleasure of facilitating and was intrigued by answers at my table. Looking forward to seeing comment cards.
- Great turnout, but almost felt like it wasn't a long enough meeting
- People were instantly engaged with facilitators - helpful input
- Well-structured meeting – wise use of time
- Clicker questions indicate that we're heading in a direction that public supports
- Concerned about expectation of differences between peoples' vision of what Master Plan truly is – i.e., specifying awning colors, what stores are going to be there, etc.
- Community buy-in exceeds my expectations from a year ago
- Great public meeting but worried about City Council buy-in later on
- Building height may be a polarizing issue
- Great diversity of people in attendance and very good conversations
- Have had nothing but positive comments from everyone I have heard from
- Story boards in hallway were great – allowed attendees to huddle beforehand and get some of their questions answered before the meeting started

Mark Johnson commented that one of the people at his table who told him he was suspicious of public meetings in general had left him a voice mail message saying it was the best public meeting he had ever been to and that the clickers were a great way to gather information.

Kaarin Knudson noted that the clicker questions were used to get an idea of people's impressions about the master plan's main elements, including their thoughts on height restrictions that are needed. She noted that the questions were relevant to earlier CAT decisions regarding open space, streets, and the creation of a "people place" on the river, and that it was important to hear what the broader community's thoughts were at this point in the process. She added that the overall landscape strategy in the master plan is decidedly native, but that people wanted to be asked their opinion. The clicker questions were meant to raise issues people have expressed interest in, and to create opportunities for public discourse around these issues.

Pat Johnston said she was out of town last week and was sorry that she missed the public meeting.

Mark Oberle also commented on the diversity of attendees, especially the age range, from high school or college students to the elderly.

Gary Wildish thanked Desiree Moore for a great welcome speech and for making the attendees feel comfortable. Dave Hauser agreed, saying that Desiree's approach to the crowd set a nice tone for the evening. Desiree replied that it was a wonderful climate to step into and that she appreciated the opportunity.

Tom Hoyt thanked Mark Johnson for doing a great job with the closing remarks.

The CAT members reiterated their thanks to the design team and consultants for an excellent public meeting.

Julie Fischer wrapped up the debrief by saying that they had received excellent media coverage leading up to the public meeting and that all the media was very positive.

Julie said that the design team made a presentation on March 6 to Blacks in Government and that the team has received some good information about the EWEB site. She added that John Rowell made a presentation to the "Inn of the Court" group at Judge Hogan's request. Two middle school classes have also recently toured the EWEB site, were very inspired, and have now completed a school project on the master plan.

She added that in the upcoming weeks there will be presentations to the Harlow Neighbors, attendance at the Asian Celebration, and a display outreach at family night at Petersen Barn.

She also reminded the CAT of the final public meeting, which will be the May 12 open house.

Jeannine Parisi added that story boards will be displayed at the Willamette Open Space Visioning project at the Eugene Public Library at a Monday afternoon drop-in event.

Julie Fischer noted that the MOU map will aid the CAT in making some important final decisions.

##### 5. Followup of Guiding Principles Review/Discussion

Mark Oberle reminded the CAT that the grading results from the last meeting reflected that one of the categories needing additional work was Economics. He asked the CAT to comment on what information they need from EWEB staff and/or the design team in order to feel better about that category.

Gary Wildish commented that it had been a long time since the CAT had discussed the economic factors, but that after he went back and looked at the information the CAT had previously received from Leland Consulting, he felt more comfortable. He added that it might be a good idea to receive a refresher on that information. Mary Unruh agreed.

Mark Johnson commented that he went through the list that Rowell-Brokaw had sent out and that it was helpful in terms of where the process is currently and also how much the market controls the economic factors.

Desiree Moore questioned the Leland report analysis regarding residential development at the site and asked where that strategy is working. She said she wants the opportunity to make the property profitable and marketable when it's all said and done. She added that proper attention should be given to what influences the CAT has to include master plan components that will help create the highest economic benefit. She noted that some questions are easy ones and some are not, i.e., who would pay for stormwater treatment.

Mark Oberle noted that stormwater treatment facilities would be part of the public street and that internal block improvements would be done by the developer.

Desiree Moore asked if this is a good time to talk about incentives and how the CAT would encourage the ultimate end result to be one that citizens and government can agree with and give financial support to.

Dave Hauser commented that it is easy to blend project feasibility and economic feasibility together. He said that since riparian restoration is critical to the framework, it might be helpful to bring a list of strategies or bulleted statements that speak to how that could happen, i.e., bonding, EWEB payment, etc. He also wondered if riparian framework is part of this and how does it impact the value of the remaining land, i.e., if that were an amenity, what would it mean to the rest of the property?

Pat Johnston commented that she had worked on the Metro Waterways project and that the Cities of Eugene and Springfield and the Army Corps of Engineers had invested \$6 million for restoration, and that the Corps of Engineers has direction from Congress to help fund such projects when they have done damage to waterways. She added that the entire Amazon Canal is authorized for funding, a \$100 million project to take out the concrete channels and make it green again. She also mentioned the Willamette River Millrace study as an option for the next planning project. She noted that when thinking about riparian, riprap, the millrace and stormwater, the Corps of Engineers is a regulating agency but also issues project permits, and that the CAT needs to find out what the Corps would be interested in regarding the EWEB site and make sure that has been allowed for in order to make their investment happen. She said it is her advice that when thinking about this, to make sure there has been enough space allowed for riparian restoration, water features, etc., so that EWEB can actually encourage a partner to join in, and that if the Corps can't be encouraged to join in, the opportunity is lost. She noted that she had received a link regarding the Willamette River Open Space Vision and that within that there

is an appendix of priority land acquisitions that lists only one project within the city limits, and that is the EWEB riverfront project. She reiterated that it would be valuable for the CAT to think about what the Corps might be interested in and how that work might be valuable.

Anita Van Asperdt thanked Pat for the information. She reminded the CAT that Hugh Pritchard's letter had stated that the site will be very expensive to develop, and that she sees student housing recommended on the possible use list, and that the Challenges section of the Leland memo mentions the likelihood that subsidies would be needed to accommodate certain uses, and that parking structures do not pencil out for office space. She said that a lot of her previous concerns were answered by re-reading the uses list in the Leland memo, but that it also brought up some new concerns for her.

Jeannine Parisi asked Nan Laurence if the EWEB site is part of the multi-unit property tax exemption (MUPTE) program as a way to incent student housing, noting the redevelopment happening in the West University area.. Nan replied that she will check on that. Nan noted that there is another mixed use/residential State program that doesn't require City Council approval, and that maybe the CAT could come up with a bullet list of possible ways to let the public know that this has been taken into account or at least discussed.

Anita Van Asperdt asked how an expensive item like that would be paid for. Kaarin Knudson replied that certain improvements that the City might eventually choose to pursue that would likely benefit the riverfront—a railroad Quiet Zone, for example—would also benefit the larger community and need to be discussed by the public with that in mind. Nan Laurence added that one would want to include sources to pay for specific aspects but not be definitive about them.

Tom Hoyt commented that he took a business approach in the beginning, but that now he is hearing that in order for this site to be successful, it has to be a public/private partnership. He said there is no way to predict the economic feasibility of that partnership, and reminded the CAT of the pit across the street from the Eugene Public Library. He noted that in that regard, the developer wanted to borrow \$2 million from the City, and now LCC is going to get \$7-8 million to do the same thing, so obviously it is becoming more feasible all the time. He urged the CAT to take a look at the end result and think about the University, the City of Eugene, and the developers, and that entails the entire 27 acres. He noted that this group only has one chance to do it right, and that to him, it's hard to get an answer about economic feasibility.

Mark Oberle noted that this agenda item had run for much longer than anticipated. Kaarin Knudson said that the March 24 CAT meeting agenda could focus on implementation and resources, as there is not yet a set agenda for that meeting. Desiree Moore replied that she hoped that discussion would be longer than 10 or 15 minutes.

## 6. Comments on Draft Ecological Report and Consistency with Design

Aryana Ferguson of Madrona Consulting asked the CAT for their comments on the draft ecological report.

Pat Johnston said that she had a fundamental concern. She explained that when the process first began, one item on the CAT's list of concerns was constraint of the river and ecology, and that she understood that the ecological consultants were hired to help the CAT understand those constraints. She said that she asked Bart Johnson's team some very specific questions and that when she read the final report,

page 2 included an italicized statement that narrowed the scope of work and its value to the CAT. She said that she had talked to Mark Oberle before tonight's meeting to explain her concern about how big the riparian area needs to be, in what specific areas, etc., and that the framework talks about an undulating setback, but it has to be based on something. She said she found it disappointing that the consultants were restrained and found a constricted answer, but that she felt that was not on the consultants, and that she was hoping for a broader analysis, i.e., 100' setback is too much, not enough, etc. She closed by saying she feels that the CAT did not receive that broad analysis and that therefore they cannot learn how the site informs that decision.

Anita Van Asperdt commented that she thinks the proposed open space is big enough to accommodate its stated goals, that is, to showcase an opportunity for education about the river and some habitat enhancement. Pat Johnston replied that the CAT didn't talk about that, and still wonders what is proposed for ecological restoration for fish, eagles, beavers, or clean water. She noted that by not having purposefully articulated the objectives for restoration, the Corps of Engineers may have a different plan. She said she had recently read that there were coho salmon and trout in the millrace and that there have been improvements on the Willamette River that haven't been seen before. She wondered if the CAT wants to make actual decisions around these issues and that that is her concern.

Anita Van Asperdt commented that the first goal the CAT set was for a vibrant people place, and that the ecological enhancement is most focused on educating people, and not so much a goal to make the site a full-fledged habitat area. She added that foremost, in her opinion, this should be a people area. She added that now may be the time to ask the CAT what their idea about that question is.

Pat Johnston read the four criteria in the downtown plan and noted that some environmental issues are people issues, and that the CAT's job is to balance those four. Anita Van Asperdt noted that the CAT has heard that this is not a habitat-critical site from the ecological consultants, and that it's a question of what the CAT and the people of Eugene feel is appropriate in terms of ecological restoration or enhancement, and what is the goal, and that maybe Pat's view is different than her own.

Dave Hauser commented that he heard Pat Johnston use the term "full ecological restoration," but that he isn't sure that's ever been a goal. He said a case could be made that perhaps a more ambitious ecological framework could be developed, but at the same time a case could be made for a more ambitious economic framework. He said he felt like the CAT hadn't gotten specific on detail for those goals, but rather a balance.

Tom Hoyt thanked Pat Johnston for asking about animals and clean water, etc. He said he would rather concentrate on animal habitat somewhere else along the river and concentrate on the water here, and that this is an opportunity to clean up the storm water before it is dumped into the river.

Gary Wildish said he is excited about the report from the standpoint of the amount of green space along the river's edge and that there isn't anywhere close to that now. He noted that this area is only 2% of the waterfront in the Eugene city limits. He added that nowhere else in that entire waterfront is there a people place, and that he sees this 2% as being more intimate. He explained that he doesn't see people jumping off rocks and swimming there due to the safety issue, but that he is excited when he looks at the master plan today, because he thinks there is 3-4 times as much open and green space, and that could increase the habitat that is currently there. He added that he thinks a tremendous amount of work has been done regarding riparian and green space.

Anita Van Asperdt said she is concerned about the image of a very big lawn that was shown at the public meeting and how that will jive with the ecological report. Aryana Ferguson replied that the ecological team hasn't commented on that issue yet.

John Rowell noted that the design team would recommend that a small area of eco-turf, which doesn't require chemicals, could be placed at the south end of restaurant row, but not along the river's edge between the bike path.

Dave Hauser asked Aryana Ferguson if there are any takeaway points that she would like the CAT to hear. Aryana replied that in regard to the earlier debrief conversation, in terms of native plants and grass vs. shrubs, she and Bart Johnson have been working on a design in their own yard to meld the two, and that native plants do not have to look wild. She explained that native plants can be put in a landscape as landscape plants and still serve a function for birds and native habitat. She said "native" does not have to be a scary word and doesn't necessarily mean wild, but rather plants that have been there a long time that birds and habitat are used to. She said she would encourage that to stay in the plan.

Aryana continued, saying the ecological team has connected this site to all the other sites—including Dorris Ranch, etc., in terms of corridor, movement and values, riprap, bank and other constraints.

She noted that the team still doesn't know how much bank length is being recommended to lay back, and that it has been hard to finalize the report until that information is known. She noted that the more the bank can be pulled back above the high water mark, the more functional and easy to maintain the riparian area will be, and that it will be much easier for things to survive, it will look better, and will create a happier community.

She said the ecological team will comment on the final design and that their report doesn't talk about setbacks because they don't have an idea of what is possible yet. She said it will be more like a conceptual level of comment but that she never thinks less than 100' of setback is good. She added they do not feel it's a site for major restoration unless it receives several million dollars in funding, and that there would be possible peril to the rest of the site, an effect on downtown Eugene, etc. She said that their focus has been on smaller species, but that eagles are currently nesting on Skinner's Butte and that they want to put eagles in the management plan. She noted that she doesn't think the eagles will be fond of restaurant row, but that planting more trees would appeal to them.

In reference to the cost of \$3-4 million for bank revision, Desiree Moore asked if there is a better use even if there is \$2 million funded to protect and encourage the type of habitat desired. Aryana Ferguson replied that it would be awfully good use to lay back the upper part of the bank and that it is difficult to maintain ivy, berry bushes, etc. She briefly explained the canopy as it relates to trees, the site, the bike path, and the laying of the bank, and said that would make the site much more friendly in many ways.

Tom Hoyt told Aryana that he applauded point #9 on the executive summary that speaks to careful plant selection and management of invasive exotic species from the river, etc., and then Tom read point #9 to the group.

Pat Johnston told Aryana that the ecological team had done a great job with the constraints they had been given. Mark Oberle noted that they didn't start with a blank slate and were able to utilize other analysis and concentrate on the current design concept to focus the analysis. He said that the ecological report was requested to contribute to the improvement and development of the open space framework.

Kaarin Knudson noted that the design team is revising the illustrative plan and the grading plan based on the ecological report and that they will be giving areas of habitat types to the ecological team, biologists and river restoration experts in the next couple of weeks. She noted that they want the CAT to know that the ecological report is in the plan and that the design team will continue to pool resources to continue to refine the plan.

Aryana Ferguson added that the ecological team is also trying to get percentages for grass, lawn and open space and define it to a degree and a range of perceptions.

Mary Unruh asked if there are ways to do landscaping and native species so that the area is more open and people can congregate. Aryana replied that there is, but that it may not be like Alton Baker Park. She added that as ecologists, her team thinks a bridge on the east end of the property is a bad move, as that section of Alton Baker Park is a very rare area and very important.

Anita Van Asperdt asked Aryana if her concern is where the bridge would land or that people would be going through a riparian area. Aryana replied that the biggest concern is that it would affect eagle nesting.

The CAT thanked Aryana for the discussion.

## 7. Discussion/Consensus Check on Use Proposal

Restaurant Row:

Jeannine Parisi briefly went over the allowable uses for restaurant row and reiterated that they were less flexible than other parts of the site to activate the types of development envisioned. She double-checked that this premise is supported.

Desiree Moore asked for a refresher on what this list is based on. Kaarin Knudson said it is based on allowable uses for C2 zoning. Desiree then asked what a total area of 12,000 square feet represents. John Rowell replied that that area would include a second story.

Tom Hoyt noted that professional offices was not on the list, and that whoever buys it may want to rent space. Tom also asked what the term “general merchandise” means. He noted that for economic feasibility, he would like to maximize the type of tenant use. Jeannine Parisi replied that office space on the second floor could possibly be conditional use.

Gary Wildish commented that the use will be market-driven and high-rent space, and that it should not be restricted.

Pat Johnston commented that someone may want to live an apartment on the second floor and wondered if anything that is allowed on the first floor is also allowed on the second floor. John Rowell said that is correct.

Tom Hoyt noted that ADA requirements would be a factor in a two-story building as relates to an elevator, etc.

Pat Johnston asked if a sustainable district and the level of requirement around that has been explored. John Rowell said it has, for example, a LEED-ND rating. He noted that Margot Long's (PW Partnership) two projects in Vancouver, Washington are platinum LEED neighborhoods, and that this site also meets the requirements for a LEED neighborhood at the gold or platinum level, and would be quite easy to certify based on the decisions that have already been made for the plan.

Pat Johnston wondered if that is a CAT decision. Gary Wildish replied that he thinks the City of Eugene could be encouraged in that and informed as to why it would be good to do this.

Desiree Moore said she looks at this as an incentive. Jeannine Parisi said that the CAT needs to have a conversation about design standards/guidelines at a future meeting due to time constraints tonight.

**The CAT reached consensus on the use proposal for Restaurant Row as presented – 8-0.**

Jeannine Parisi asked for consensus regarding addition of a museum on site. **The CAT reached consensus – 8-0.**

Jeannine Parisi asked for consensus regarding a general merchandise store with a smaller building footprint. After a brief discussion and a request to be careful not to exclude a small convenience store, **the CAT reached consensus – 8-0.**

Jeannine Parisi asked for consensus regarding a lodging facility, apartment and/or office use on the second floor. After a brief discussion regarding elevator access, **the CAT reached consensus – 8-0.**

This completed the consensus discussion regarding proposed uses for Restaurant Row.

The CAT then briefly discussed uses that would not be allowed anywhere on the site based on Rowell-Brokaw's recommended listing based on the C2 zone. Dave Hauser commented that these uses do not seem to fit the character of the site and that his view of these hasn't changed. Gary Wildish agreed. Jeannine asked if there were any additional uses that should be added to the list of uses not allowed. None were submitted.

**The CAT reached consensus regarding the list of disallowed riverfront uses – 8-0.**

Jeannine Parisi read the conditional uses list:

- E-commerce
- Light manufacturing
- Recycling collection facility
- Hospital

Kaarin Knudson noted that allowable uses would still have to be within the guidelines. After a brief discussion, the group decided to revisit this list at a future meeting.

Tom Hoyt asked if the University of Oregon has been involved in the discussion regarding suggested uses that do not appear on the list, and wondered if they're interested, if they would then be excluded as a potential purchaser because of the uses not being suited to them. Jeannine Parisi replied that there have been informal conversations with University representatives about the potential for student housing and artist/studio space. Tom Hoyt then asked if an Oregon Research Institute type building would be an allowed use. Jeannine Parisi said that it would be.

#### 8. Review Master Plan Document Outline and Template

Due to time constraints, this was postponed to the March 24 meeting.

#### 9. Closing Comments/Next Steps/Parking Lot Requests:

Parking Lot for March 24 meeting:

- 1) Follow-up on conditional use permit list
- 2) Master Plan document outline and template
- 3) Implementation - major agenda item

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

**Next Meeting:            Wednesday, March 24  
                                 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
                                 EWEB Board Room**