

EWEB Riverfront Master Plan Community Advisory Team (CAT)

Wednesday, July 22, 2009, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

EWEB Board Room

Present: Dave Hauser, Tom Hoyt, Mark Johnson, Pat Johnston, Desiree Moore, Dean Pape', Mary Unruh, and Gary Wildish, members; Bob Cassidy, EWEB Commissioner; Mark Oberle, Project Manager; Greg Brokaw, Kaarin Knudson and John Rowell, Rowell Brokaw Architects; Julie Fischer and Ellen Teninty, T'NT Consulting; Chris Zahas, Leland Consulting; Derek Lee and Margot Long, PWL Partnership; John Ellis and Madeleine Zayas-Mart, WRT/Solomon; Vicki Maxon, Recorder; Charles Biggs, Bob Hart, Peter Kinz, Kevin Matthews, Tim Shinaberger, and Zachary Vishanoff, public.

Absent: Anita Van Asperdt, member.

1. Welcome and Agenda/Material Review

Pat Johnston welcomed everyone.

2. Comments from the Audience

Pat Johnston reminded the public to limit their comments to three minutes each and that, if needed, there will be time allowed for a response from CAT members. She asked the public to refrain from making comments during the balance of the meeting because CAT meetings are work sessions.

Zachary Vishanoff said that he talked to the Historic Review Board recently about assisting the CAT or possibly appointing a Historic Review Board representative to the CAT in order to be informed about any tax breaks or special grants available to assist with site renovation and to design a more unique master plan. He said he feels the term "master plan" has a bad connotation because it doesn't usually involve repair of land, preservation or reuse. He said that the Historic Review Board is enthusiastic about possible involvement in the master plan and that they know a lot about Eugene's past. He added that he hoped the CAT would consider inviting them to have more of a role in this project.

Zachary continued, saying that at the July 8 meeting he criticized the CAT's three charrette choices but that, after further thought, he feels they should retain the three choices but have each contain a plan A and a plan B—the A plan being complete development, the B plan constituting reuse/repair or more preservation involved. In this regard, there would be six potential plans after the public process, with the A plan being brand new construction and the B plan requiring greater effort, i.e., less cookie cutter type planning. He added that this would broaden the categories and thus the Historic Review Board could have a greater role.

Mark Oberle replied that the CAT isn't able to appoint a Historic Review Board representative to their team because that appointment has to be made by the EWEB Board and City Council. He added that the Historic Review Board will be consulted during the master plan process and will be invited to attend all open houses, public engagement events, etc.

Tom Hoyt thanked Zachary for inviting the CAT to the July City Club meeting and said he thought the meeting generated some great dialogue.

3. Approve Minutes

Mary Unruh confirmed that when she suggested a group tour of the site, she meant not just the EWEB site but any other wetlands or property that has relevance to the master plan project. The July 8 minutes were then approved.

4. Development Overview and Discussion

Pat Johnston asked the core design team to introduce themselves.

Kaarin Knudson briefed the CAT on the July 21 EWEB Board presentation by RBA and T'NT, and the response to some Board concerns regarding public engagement strategies. She said that it was a productive conversation.

Chris Zahas of Leland Consulting gave a Powerpoint presentation regarding urban development principles. This presentation may be viewed on the EWEB website (eweb.org).

Pat Johnston asked Chris how the parking space to square footage ratio in his presentation relates to sustainability requirements. Chris replied that he is not LEED-certified, and Margot Long replied that the ratio is pretty high, but not too high. Pat Johnston noted that she would think the CAT would want to think about limiting parking spaces vs. increasing parking spaces, and the cost to do each. Dean Pape' noted that LEED certification doesn't consider parking issues, but rather square footage, activity and other opportunities.

Chris Zahas noted that with gasoline prices on the rise, shorter work commutes are more desirable, which in turn reinforces a "quality place," smaller area, and a more central location. He added that the current economy reinforces those issues.

Tom Hoyt asked Chris if current economic conditions influence his decisions regarding the success of a project. Chris replied that one of the biggest factors for success of a project is market timing and synergy with prospective buyers or planned projects.

Pat Johnston asked about the importance of having an anchor store in a building complex and whether it is better for it to be privately owned. Chris replied that the master plan can lay out special use for the anchor. Pat then asked if that would affect the builder, i.e., if an anchor isn't there, they may not be interested. Chris replied that he didn't think this master plan will need to deal with that level of detail. He added that we won't know if that user is out there, and that the property owner or their representative has to be in charge of finding that out.

Regarding putting more detail into the Master Plan, Dean Pape' asked if Chris recommends something that is more fluid or more flexible, i.e., regarding uses, etc. Chris replied that if the CAT and consulting team do their job, that will happen. Dean noted that it is important to have a feasible project that is still flexible down the road. Chris agreed, saying that the developers don't want their hands tied in any way.

Dave Hauser asked at what point in the process the financial incentives will be developed. Chris replied that may not be until the developer has the project.

Chris also noted that when talking about placement, the smallest detail can ruin a deal—a building facing the wrong block or bad siding—when everything else such as location and price are perfect.

Dean Pape' asked if people understand the concept of placemaking. Chris Zahas replied that the best way to describe it is to create a sense of place, i.e., the Pearl District in Portland—all the buildings together add value where one building alone would not.

5. Natural + Urban Interface Discussion

Margot Long of PWL Partnership began her Powerpoint presentation by saying that she has never seen such an abundance of park area along a river corridor as she has seen on the EWEB property and in other parts of Eugene, and that most cities similar to this have privately owned parks. She noted that she observed our riverfront area filled with people of all types of demographics who have a clear desire to get to the water—walking from the bike trail, floating the river in innertubes, and kayaking. She added that the EWEB site is so close to the river's edge that she envisions a future connection to the city when the fence between the EWEB site and the river comes down.

She then showed slides of various riverfront projects in Vancouver, B.C. and briefly described each one. An outline of her presentation follows:

Coal Harbour – Vancouver, B.C. (1,000 acres):

- Built on rail line
- First new development of residential on industrial land (new urban renewal project)
- Formal approach to open space
- Placed the public on the waterfront and the buildings at the back edge

SE False Creek – Vancouver, B.C. (80 acres – 50 City-owned/30 privately owned)

- Testing out sustainability – in the works for maybe 12 years? (many iterations)
- Part of this site will be the 2010 Winter Olympic athletes' village (25 acres)
- Preservation/restoration of historic value (historic buildings retained)
- Open space – everything between the building edges
- Success = connectivity/sense of discovery
- Variety of experiences apply to EWEB—desire to get to water, natural features, environmental overlay

- Use of recirculated water, i.e., storm water pools
- Mends urban fabric with natural sources
- An island was created which tripled the shoreline (due to habitat preservation rules)
Herring returned after an 80-year absence
Bald eagles returned
- Waterways in general are getting cleaner and cleaner

East Fraser Lands – Vancouver, B.C. (old mill site – 130 acres)

- Takes water and extends back up to community
- On the Songbird International Flyway – needed to support this with an open space pattern

Pat Johnston asked who defined the criteria for this project, especially as relates to the Songbird International Flyway. Margot replied that the public defined the criteria and reiterated that the riverfront master plan has to be about the place, come from the public, and be about Eugene.

Dockside Project – edge of Victoria, B.C. (12 acres)

- City held a competition to design this project
- Developer set vision – green; the most green community in the world
- A lot of industrial, ship repair, etc. still located here
- Open space is limited – very small – public right of way
- Embedded with green infrastructure
- Everything is self-sustainable – energy, wastewater, landscape, etc.
- Lagoons come off of wastewater treatment plant
- Solar panels and green walls

Pat Johnston asked if the CAT will be able to get to this level of vision for the Riverfront Master Plan. Derek Lee of PWL Partnership said he thinks so, if they continue to look at how different systems work together. For example, what are the CAT's goals for water management (as in the above stormwater circulation example)? He added it is usually best to set up the end goals and then work backwards when thinking about infrastructure, funding, etc.

Pat Johnston asked at what point the consulting team frames the vision to make best use of their time. John Rowell replied that in the next month they will begin that process, and that the charrette will be the testing ground. He added that economic feasibility is integral to this piece and that it is very important to have a realistic vision. He said he hopes that the CAT will engage in this process and help the consulting team write the vision statement and principles to be tested with the charrette. Kaarin Knudson added that the CAT will be setting the goals and guidelines for the vision, including public input.

John Rowell added that RBA has already learned that there would be a mechanism for paying for stormwater maintenance (as in the Dockside project) and that there is a funding source to maintain that (as relates to City parks).

Tom Hoyt asked if the CAT could get a map of the above riverfront projects in order to tour them if any team member is in the Vancouver, B.C. area. Margot Long volunteered to lead a

tour if anyone visits the city. John Rowell added that seeing these projects in person has a profound impact.

6. Riverfront Use Scenarios Discussion

John Rowell gave a presentation regarding previous City of Eugene/Lane County planning documents. A brief outline follows.

Downtown Plan 2000

- Example of vision statement (ours is not yet written)
- Need to move toward something similar

Courthouse District Concept Plan 2002

- Points to the four principles reviewed in the Master Plan

2004 Eugene Downtown Plan

- People places on the river
- Balance development potential with environmental strategy
- Ample open space - provides an opportunity to enjoy this special area

Foundation: Downtown Plan

4 Riverfront Principles + MOU criteria

- Vision Statement
(e.g. Vision Paragraph from Downtown Vision Plan)
- Principles and Goals
- Parameters
- Use Scenarios (Program)
- Design Options (Concepts)
- Master Plan

Dave Hauser asked if the Downtown Plan would serve the CAT well regarding a vision statement. John Rowell replied that he thinks it's a good plan, solid but very high-level, and the Riverfront Master Plan would need to be more specific.

Dean Pape' noted that many people in the marketing industry no longer use the word "sustainability" because it's a buzz word these days. Madeleine Zayas-Mart noted that the term means different things to different people. Pat Johnston noted that she believes people understand it but they define it differently (when used with the four principles).

John Rowell continued with a framework to begin thinking about vision statements.

Sustainability:

- A place that moves the city toward sustainability
- Natural Ecology
- Social Equity

- Economics

Possible principles for project (ecology):

- Green infrastructure – streets, stormwater, energy, water, waste, materials, food
- Fish-friendly riverfront
- Restore riparian condition

Tom Hoyt said he believes that people are more focused on the greater Eugene neighborhood (which includes the millrace) and that restoring it would cost a lot of money, but that making it bull trout and Chinook friendly might be something to think about.

John Rowell continued.

Identity:

- Captures Eugene's spirit of Place
- Public-ness permeates the site
- EWEB leaves behind a legacy that fits their mission of conservation of energy and water
- Eugene's birthplace - an industrial and cultural history

Use:

- A multi-use, active, livable community that is part of Downtown: a mix of public space, restaurants, shops and housing
- Public amenities that offer cultural, educational and social opportunities
- Economically viable, vibrant and resilient
- A place of social and economic diversity

Connection:

- Connect the river to the city
- View corridors to the river
- Integrate the urban and the ecological
- Pedestrian and bicycle-oriented
- Accessible to everyone

Pat Johnston asked about the best way to engage with the consulting team in order to move this process along between CAT meetings. Kaarin Knudson replied that any additional items and/or a list of questions or draft vision statements can be e-mailed to her before the August 12 CAT meeting. John Rowell noted that the consulting team will help the CAT connect to previous documents and presentations, and that the interview download will happen in August.

Margot Long noted that it is best to establish and embrace the guiding principles early on, and/or ideas from the public, but to make sure that those fit within the principles that have been established, and that sometimes it is the principles that need to be adjusted.

A brief discussion ensued regarding adding additional time to the August 12 CAT meeting. It was decided to begin the August 12 meeting a half hour early at 5:00 p.m. and still end at 7:30 p.m.

7. Closing Comments and Next Steps

Gary Wildish said he would like the CAT to get a copy of the False Creek policy statement. Margot Long agreed to provide that.

Pat Johnston noted that there is an upcoming group interview regarding transportation that some of the CAT members may be attending. She asked if there is concern about having a quorum present at that discussion. Mark Oberle said he would get back to the CAT on that decision. Julie Fisher said it is her impression that if there isn't discussion or decision-making between CAT members at that interview, they will be considered observers.

Kaarin Knudson commented that there were a large number of people who had already RSVP'd for that group interview and that meeting space may be an issue. Desiree Moore said she had access to a larger meeting room if needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 12 – 5:00 to 7:30 p.m.
 EWEB Board Room**