

EWEB Riverfront Master Plan Community Advisory Team (CAT)

Wednesday, August 12, 2009, 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

EWEB Board Room

Present: Dave Hauser, Tom Hoyt, Mark Johnson, Pat Johnston, Desiree Moore, Mary Unruh, and Gary Wildish, members; Mark Oberle, Project Manager; Jeannine Parisi and Debra Smith, EWEB staff; Nan Laurence, City of Eugene; Greg Brokaw, Kaarin Knudson and John Rowell, Rowell Brokaw Architects; Julie Fischer and Ellen Teninty, T'NT Consulting; Chris Zahas, Leland Consulting; Kevin Connery, PWL Partnership; John Ellis and Madeleine Zayas-Mart, WRT/Solomon; Vicki Maxon, Recorder; Bob Hart, Kevin Matthews, Tom Snyder, and Zachary Vishanoff, public.

Absent: Anita Van Asperdt and Dean Pape' (conference call difficulty), members.

1. Welcome and Agenda/Material Review

Dave Hauser welcomed everyone and thanked them for being prompt, in light of tonight's very full agenda. He asked the CAT if they would be willing to start the August 22 meeting at 5:00 p.m. due to having a lot to accomplish between now and the first public engagement meeting. The CAT agreed to check with tonight's absent members before making that decision. Tom Hoyt noted that he will be absent for the August 26 meeting and will be present via conference call for the September 9 meeting.

2. Comments from the Audience

Dave Hauser noted that there are four CAT meetings over the next several months that are dedicated to public engagement, and that the CAT will continue to provide an opportunity for public comment at every meeting. He reminded the public that they are allowed three minutes to speak and that, if CAT members have comments, they are to wait until all speakers have finished before making their comments. He reiterated that the public who speak are required to respect the process and the participants, adhere to the three-minute limit, and refrain from personal attacks on any others in attendance.

Zachary Vishanoff thanked the CAT for acknowledging his invitation to them to attend the City Club meeting and said he felt that meeting was a good start for discussion. He noted that Oregon Research Institute (ORI) is supposed to start construction on their new building this summer, and that he feels that schedule is a bit ambitious. He added that he feels ORI is uniquely situated to undermine the EWEB and Riverfront Research Park planning process, and that if the public becomes skeptical of riverfront development because of this, it won't make the CAT's job any easier. He urged the CAT to include ORI in their discussions and possibly even to create a seat for them on the CAT. He concluded by saying that it doesn't make sense for ORI to be on a different page than EWEB and the CAT.

3. Approve Minutes

The July 22 minutes were approved. Gary Wildish noted that the CAT has not yet received the False Creek project policy document. Kaarin Knudson said she has it and will send it out before the August 26 meeting.

4. Public Engagement Update/Approval of Public Engagement Plan

Ellen Teninty reminded the CAT of the draft public engagement plan that they had discussed at the July 22 meeting and noted that she has not received any further revisions since that meeting. She said it is her impression that the CAT is ready to adopt the plan (draft #7) by consensus.

CONSENSUS DECISION:

The CAT adopted the Public Engagement Plan – 7-0.

Ellen continued, saying that the project team has been very busy, with 58 individual interviews, two focus groups on river ecology and sustainable urbanism, and three group interviews—transportation, ecology, and art, history and culture, which results in a total of about 76 people. She added that the project team will have a process meeting on Monday, August 17 to identify themes, repetitive ideas, etc. in order to formulate them into a document that will be shared at the August 26 meeting.

Further accomplishments:

- Met with Human Rights Accessibility Committee (ADA, etc.)
- Met with Neighborhood Leaders Council (neighborhood association leaders) – very positive meeting
- Scheduled meeting with Downtown Neighborhood Association
- Acquired space in neighborhood newsletters to 5500 households with a high reading rate – will write first article soon.
- Will set up Editorial Board meetings, probably after September 15, after vision statement and goals are approved by EWEB Board
- Will be identifying CAT members to communicate with the different organizations like Rotary Clubs – CAT members may get calls to represent the CAT at various meetings
- Website will be up in approximately two weeks –information is being uploaded this week and next
- Have received bios from some CAT members but still need others – CAT members will approve them before they are put on the website
- Currently building a public meeting calendar for September-May
- Will build an interested parties data base before the October 2-3 public meeting – asked the CAT to assemble names, e-mail addresses and phone numbers (optional) for contacts, and get them to Julie Fisher

Tom Hoyt noted that some people aren't anxious to divulge their e-mail address in a public setting or on a website, and wondered if CAT members could contact those people directly. Ellen said that was fine. Julie Fisher noted that the e-mail program that will be used to send out information doesn't show the e-mail addresses but is in bulk e-mail format.

A brief discussion followed regarding public meetings law as relates to e-mail communication in the above setting. Mark Oberle reiterated an earlier ruling that e-mail communication between an e-mail/data base program and the public does not violate public meeting law. Julie Fisher added that the e-mail program they will use also contains an opt out for anyone who wishes to discontinue the service.

Ellen continued, noting that any calendar notation in turquoise represents an event that has the potential for a CAT member to participate, with a display, talking to the public, etc., and that CAT members will receive support and training for those opportunities. She noted that Eugene Celebration in September will be one opportunity in which to do that and that the goal is to appear in diverse locations. She used Oregon Duck football games (four home games in a row this fall) as another example, with the opportunity to have a display and a CAT representative on the DeFazio Footbridge. She added that the calendar notations in blue represent potential speaking engagements that are not yet confirmed. She asked the CAT to think about events or organizations they can present to and to send those names/organizations to her or to Kaarin Knudson with the date that they occur, and Jeannine Parisi will contact those to see if it's possible for the CAT to do a presentation.

Mark Oberle asked if CAT members and EWEB staff will get a copy of the above-mentioned calendar. Ellen replied that the calendar she is referring to tonight is an internal document, but that Kaarin Knudson is working on one for CAT members and EWEB staff.

Desiree Moore asked if it is possible to get a list of the people who were invited to the various focus group meetings and also a list of who attended and who did not. Ellen said she would provide that list.

5. CAT Download from Focus Groups/Group Interviews

Pat Johnston asked for comment or questions regarding the focus groups and group interviews.

Gary Wildish said he attended the transportation, ecology and cultural/arts/history focus groups and appreciated the input from those who participated. He said one thought that struck him during the ecology focus group was that ecology not only involves the frontage of property that EWEB owns, but it's also upriver, down river, across the river, etc.—the big picture. He said that he sees opportunity to communicate with our friends to the east (University of Oregon) for opportunities on their property. He added that it was very worthwhile for him to attend these focus groups and that his vision was broadened a bit by them.

Mary Unruh said she attended the arts and cultural focus group and was surprised that it seemed like many of the participants had not thought about the riverfront area before. She said she

thought it gave them a chance to start thinking about it and formulate their own visions that may come out later in the public process.

Desiree Moore said she found the arts and cultural focus group enlightening as well, and that she agreed that they seemed to be taken aback by the process, but that she felt like they had a fresh look at it and that they wanted to make sure art had its place in the process. She said she also attended the City Club meeting and felt quite the opposite—that the speakers were VERY prepared and VERY familiar with the process, and that some of them had even put a price tag on EWEB's main office building for. She added that she would like an opportunity in the future to discuss the uneasiness she feels about the Eugene City Council ultimately making the major decision on what happens to the EWEB property, especially with their specific interest in it.

Ellen Teninty said she agreed with Desiree, and that TN'T has had some conversations with the City Attorney and City Councilors, and has developed a list of questions for them which includes Desiree's concern.

Tom Hoyt said that he is also very concerned that the CAT is wasting their time if the City Council decides to use the EWEB office building for a new city hall. He added that the other side of that is that there's 27 acres of property and, if the City wants the office building for a new city hall, there's still plenty of acreage left. He noted that the CAT doesn't have control over that decision and that he's comfortable proceeding in spite of that opportunity, or not. He added that he believes the CAT's focus has to be the river, EWEB's neighbors, and the people of Eugene.

Desiree Moore said she feels just the opposite of that, but that she will withhold further comment until a later time.

Dave Hauser asked the CAT members who attended the focus groups to share one idea that truly intrigued them.

Desiree Moore said that the idea of having rotating artists with provided housing and education for two weeks at a time is very intriguing. Mary Unruh said she was also intrigued by the idea of having a studio space on the property, not only for the visiting artists but for a public forum so people can see the finished product.

Pat Johnston said she noted some overarching issues and shared concerns that the focus groups seemed unprepared for the conversations. She said her understanding was that one of the purposes of the focus groups was a mechanism to identify 10 flash points about the EWEB property. She said the CAT needs to be conscious of that as they move forward, to keep those flash points from becoming issues.

Pat added that this is not the fault of the process, but she feels like the EWEB property is a black box to the community because of it being fenced off, etc. She noted that she has worked on previous projects with public participation where the public was given a series of maps in order to understand constraints, i.e., soil, etc., which provided for a more robust discussion. She said she felt that after the ecology focus group, because EWEB is so black box, that information isn't available, and that the CAT is at a bit of a disadvantage without having that information for

discussion. She added that she felt the discussions were more abstract than useful. Without knowing a parameter for the design of the river edge, like how deep the bedrock is, key information would be lacking. She wondered how the CAT will address this, and said there might need to be a cycle back with some of those focus group participants in order to invite a more robust discussion instead of an abstract one.

Mary Unruh reiterated her feeling that the arts and cultural group was sort of like a deer in the headlights. She agreed that cycling back within different interest areas is a good idea, specifically for those issues, and then they may be more prepared to fire off ideas.

Mark Johnson said that the transportation group was very well-versed regarding the issues and that it was a very good discussion, and that the group did a good job of identifying the challenges because the right people were in attendance. He said he enjoyed listening to the concepts that were tossed around on how to manage vehicle traffic and be pedestrian-friendly rather than just solely how to get as many cars to the site as possible.

Gary Wildish agreed, saying that he was intrigued by the idea of making a right turn before 6th & High on the west side of the Ferry Street Bridge going southbound instead of going downward to drop onto the property, and that this route could also be an exit from the property. He noted that there is an existing loop straight across the railroad tracks that could drop right onto the EWEB property, and he feels this is a pretty good idea. He added that in his opinion, the important thing is to gain better access OFF the property, which would have to be built.

Kevin Connery from PWL Partnership introduced himself and said he graduated from the University of Oregon in the 1980s, and that the EWEB property was a black box at that time, too. He added that he is intrigued with the site possibilities and the opportunity to build into an open space plan from an ecological perspective. He added that Margot Long couldn't stay for the meeting tonight because she had to fly to Toronto to get a design award for the Dockside Green project located in Vancouver, B.C.

Dave Hauser and Kaarin Knudson noted that the CAT is planning a more in-depth summary of the focus group meeting download at the August 26 meeting, to report on feedback and how that information will be captured.

6. Urban Design – Mixed Use/Building Types/Block Structure

John Ellis and Madeleine Zayas-Mart from WRT/Solomon gave a presentation regarding mixed use site designs that are similar to the EWEB riverfront property, including the Sacramento Docks, Santa Rosa, California; Berkeley, California, etc. John Ellis showed examples of different building densities/building types that might work for the site, and Madeleine Zayas-Mart shared maps illustrating existing buildings and constraints at the EWEB site. This presentation will soon be available for viewing on the EWEB Riverfront Master Plan website.

Dave Hauser asked John Ellis for his interpretation of what capturing Eugene's "spirit of place" means. John replied that the EWEB riverfront area needs to reflect Eugene's uniqueness and that design guidelines need to be created that pick up the character of Eugene. He added that it is the

only place in Eugene where the downtown meets the water, and that the history and challenges of that need to be incorporated in the design. He noted that WRT/Solomon would be providing the CAT with further case studies from other cities as well as their own observations.

Desiree Moore noted that several of the sites in John's presentation contained underground parking, and that seems pretty major for the EWEB property. John agreed, saying that underground parking is expensive and that he envisions possibly one level up and one level down for a parking area.

Tom Hoyt noted that the EWEB Board has challenged the CAT to develop a plan that is economically feasible for a developer to purchase for a price that enables EWEB to get enough money for a new location. He asked John Ellis if his company has experience with that type of scenario. John replied that WRT/Solomon worked with Chris Zahas on the Santa Rosa, California project, and that it is important to balance the amount of development necessary with the desire for open space against the cost of the infrastructure. He added that they may study many different scenarios in order to achieve the maximum density of development and a minimum amount of parking, or visa versa.

Chris Zahas noted that the Berkeley, California project had 27 different sources of funding, and that there is no riverfront area in the country that isn't a public/private partnership. He added that it's a question of how far development can continue before the project breaks, and then how much it will cost to take it to the next step.

John Ellis added that he feels that this project will need to be a public/private partnership and possibly be funded with City or State bonds. Pat Johnston noted that the millrace restoration project in Springfield, Oregon is funded by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Nan Laurence asked John Ellis if the design team has experience with railroad edges on the perimeter of a property. John replied that the Santa Rosa, California project contains a pedestrian crossing near a train station and that they had to deal with safety and PUC standards and negotiate with the PUC during the design process.

7. Discussion/Development of Vision and Project Principles

Kaarin Knudson and John Rowell of Rowell Brokaw (RBA) reiterated the process for visioning and project principles that was begun at the July 22 meeting. They gave a Powerpoint presentation regarding draft vision statements and subject headings, an outline of which is below:

Proposed Vision Headings:

- Sustainability
- Ecology
- Identity
- Multi-Use
- Connection
- Economic Viability

Sustainability:

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

Ecology:

- Green Infrastructure: streets, stormwater, energy, water, waste, materials, food, etc.
- Protect and enhance complex river function
- Riparian edge restoration that reflects inundation regimes
- Enhance the community's ecological awareness
- Understand the site in the broader Willamette Valley watershed

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
- Explore opportunities to integrate the layers of Eugene's history in the site

Multi-Use

- A multi-use, active, livable, accessible community that is part of downtown
- Public amenities that offer cultural, educational and social opportunities
- A place of social and economic diversity
- A mix of public and private land uses
- A diversity of housing options
- Re-inhabit the site as a part of downtown housing resurgence

Connection:

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

Economic Viability:

- Be flexible so as not to preclude economically viable uses in the future
- Capitalize on long-term benefits with upfront value
- Cultivate local development capacity, expertise and participation
- Define economic viability beyond the boundaries of the EWEB site

Potential Use Scenarios:

- Residential with some commercial amenities
- Adaptive re-use and infill

- Office with some commercial amenities
- Downtown Waterfront Park with civic and commercial amenities
- New Industry Innovation District: artisan, energy, light manufacturing, brewery
- Civic, Cultural, Educational District

Pat Johnston asked if RBA was looking to the CAT for a decision on whether this project would be LEED-certified. John said that they would, but that they had heard from EWEB staff, for example, that LEED certification doesn't always measure energy and that there needs to be a more precise target for energy conservation on the EWEB site.

Kevin Connery said that in the Docks Green project, the City of Vancouver required LEED platinum status in order to assure the public that the project would happen. He added that an example of another parameter that could be set would be to show that the project is carbon neutral.

The CAT then began a discussion to revise the above headings, which were recorded on flipcharts. It was agreed that sustainability should be broadened to Sustainable Urbanism and that multi-use should be renamed "Balance of Uses."

Pat Johnston asked if the CAT should capture the public/private partnership piece at this level of vision statement. John Rowell replied that that may be too specific at this point, however it can be done, and the key issue would be feasibility.

Gary Wildish pointed out that developers have a large bag of tools which allows them to work with whoever they wish in order to get funding opportunities for green construction and sustainable development that are cost-effective.

Pat Johnston said she believes that the term "economic viability" is in the eye of the beholder and that it depends on what issue is being measured.

Gary Wildish added that actual implementation and the ability to execute the contract are extremely important. Dave Hauser agreed, noting that in the end, the project needs to be achievable.

Regarding the Identity section, Tom Hoyt pointed out that long-time Eugene residents like himself have a different perspective about Eugene's identity than people who haven't lived in Eugene as long.

Pat Johnston said she believes that the site's identity includes being welcoming to all communities (for example, a conservative logger vs. an environmentalist). She noted that a Portland, Oregon site she is familiar with was so privately controlled that the public didn't feel welcome there. She said the CAT needs to be conscious of whether or not the site's identity is excluding any group of people.

Julie Fisher asked the CAT to e-mail any additional suggestions to her via e-mail.

8. Closing Comments/Next Steps

Ellen Teninty summarized the list of revisions from tonight's meeting and said that this vision statement process would be continued at the August 26 meeting. She added that the CAT will receive them in an e-mail and should send any comments to Kaarin Knudson.

Ellen added that draft project parameters, a summary of the focus groups and interviews, and draft use scenarios would be discussed at the August 26 meeting.

Pat Johnston requested that meeting materials be e-mailed to the CAT the Friday before each meeting so that there would be ample time over a weekend to review them. Kaarin Knudson agreed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 26 – 5:00 to 7:30 p.m.
PLEASE NOTE EARLIER STARTING TIME
EWEB Board Room, North Building