

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

Wednesday, October 14, 5:00-7:30 p.m.

EWEB Board Room

Present: Dave Hauser, Tom Hoyt, Mark Johnson, Pat Johnston, Dean Pape', Mary Unruh, and Anita Van Asperdt, members; Bob Cassidy, EWEB Commissioner; Mark Oberle, Project Manager; Jeannine Parisi, EWEB staff; Tom Larsen and Nan Laurence, City of Eugene; Kaarin Knudson and John Rowell, Rowell Brokaw Architects; Margot Long and Derek Lee of PWL Partnership; Madeleine Zayas-Mart of WRT Urban Design; Julie Fischer and Ellen Teninty, T'NT Consulting; Vicki Maxon, Recorder; Charles Biggs, Bob Hart, Kevin Matthews and Tom Snyder, public.

Absent: Desiree Moore and Gary Wildish

### 1. Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review

Dave Hauser welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda. He asked everyone at the table to introduce themselves in light of the design team members being present at this meeting.

### 2. Comments from the Audience and CAT Comments

Dave Hauser noted that the start time for this meeting had been originally noticed for 5:30 p.m. instead of 5:00 p.m., so any public who may arrive at 5:30 will be allowed to comment later in the evening.

Tom Snyder said that he attended the City Club meeting on Friday, October 9 and was very energized by it. He noted that Brian Obie and others suggested that the EWEB property should belong to the City of Eugene in perpetuity and be leased. He said he questioned how to go about that and said that it wouldn't be easy, but that getting someone else to pay for that might be a good idea.

Bob Cassidy, EWEB Commissioner, said that he appreciates the master plan process and that economic viability means different things to different people. He concurred with the City Club speakers who stated that the EWEB property should stay in public ownership and utilize development commission to lease the land. He said that many people have commented on what the property is worth and that many figures have been thrown out, one figure being approximately \$20 million or more. He added that because of a BPA rate increase, EWEB will soon be increasing its electric rates 4.5%, which will increase the average residential bill approximately \$3.79 per month. He noted that the \$20 million that the EWEB property may be worth translates into about a 1% rate increase, which would amount to approximately \$1-2 per month on an average residential bill. He asked the CAT to keep that in mind during the master plan process.

Tom Hoyt said he was also at the City Club meeting and was also energized by it, just as he was at the public kickoff event and the charrette. He said that he is struck by the reasonableness, balance, sincerity and integrity of the Eugene residents who have attending these meetings. He added that even though he is sometimes critical about facilitation and other aspects of CAT meetings, he wants to be complimentary about the public outreach piece, and that he is learning a lot from it and keeping an open mind, and is very pleased with the process.

Mary Unruh said she also attended the City Club meeting and was struck by the thoughtful remarks that were made, and also by some interesting ideas that were brought up that the CAT has not thought about.

Anita Van Asperdt asked for a short synopsis of the City Club meeting. Kaarin Knudson recapped the main points from each speaker and said that the City Club website provides links to re-broadcast opportunities.

### 3. Approval of Minutes

The August 26 minutes were approved. The September 23 minutes have been completed but not edited yet, and will be submitted for approval at the October 28 meeting.

### 4. Debrief Public Kickoff Event

Ellen Teninty said that 160 people attended the September 30 public kickoff event and that 80% of those were new registrants, with 20% being people who were in previous interview or focus groups. She said that the attendees were excited about the site tours and that she had received positive feedback in the form of e-mails and phone calls. She noted that the unedited comments from the flipcharts and yellow comment sheets that the CAT received this week will be developed into a summary report, and she thanked Vicki Maxon for spending part of last weekend typing them. She added that a thank you will be sent to all the attendees.

Ellen then reminded the CAT that their October 28 meeting will include planning for the November 10 public outreach event and discussing how to present the material and get feedback. She asked the CAT to contact her or Julie Fischer with any additional contact information to add to the interested parties database.

Ellen then asked the CAT for their feedback on the public kickoff event. Several CAT members said they thought it went very well and that the turnout was even greater than they expected, and thanked T'NT and Rowell Brokaw Architects for their efforts.

Ellen also thanked everyone for their role in the process and/or for working at the public kickoff event. She added that when the public registers on the riverfront website, a response is sent to them, and that the CAT will receive a compilation of their comments once a month or so, electronically.

Julie Fischer noted that Gary Wildish spoke to a North Eugene High School biology class about the riverfront master plan process last week, and that the students were very interested in his presentation, and in fact are touring the EWEB site on Thursday, October 15. She added that they have been given charrette materials and will conduct their own charrette. She asked if a CAT member would be available to attend the site tour between 2:00 and 2:45 p.m. on Thursday.

Ellen Teninty said that the CAT will again be asked for availability for speaking engagements to show the public the design options after November 10 and to gather feedback on the options from November 11 to mid-January or later. She asked the CAT to be thinking about outreach opportunities and added that a sign-up list will be distributed by mid-November.

#### 5. Synopsis of AIA Charrette

Kaarin Knudson gave a Powerpoint presentation/synopsis of the October 3 design charrette, which was held in cooperation with the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Rowell Brokaw Architects donated all the project coordination and materials necessary to hold the Saturday event. She said approximately 80 people attended and that she received very positive comments from the participants. She added that a summary of the event will be posted on both the project website and the AIA website.

Kaarin Knudson reviewed some of the common themes and exciting ideas that came out of the eight different tables. Each table included a facilitator from the design profession, a landscape architect or registered architect, at least one member of the community, a landscape architecture student and an architecture student from the University, and a member of the CAT or project team. A Powerpoint presentation summarizing the charrette's work will be available at [www.eugeneriverfront.com](http://www.eugeneriverfront.com).

Dave Hauser said he attended the charrette and found the process to be extremely helpful. A brief discussion ensued regarding the charrette format and some of the ideas that evolved out from it. Anita Van Asperdt suggested that the medium-sized scale of the buildings was another common theme.

Pat Johnston noted that it is interesting to her that when the public talks about the millrace (such as at the public kickoff event), they speak mostly to its history and not necessarily about restoration. She added that it is also interesting to her that Eugene's lumber industry history was mentioned several times at the public kickoff event and that she hadn't thought about that.

#### 6. Second Public Comment Scheduled for 5:30 p.m.

Bob Hart noted that the diagrams show a reconstructed millrace that runs down Ferry Street, and that mill ponds are an obvious connection with the lumber industry.

## 7. Preliminary Riverfront Master Plan Design Concepts

John Rowell and Kaarin Knudson presented five preliminary design concepts in a Powerpoint presentation. Kaarin noted that the CAT will be asked tonight for their input on the basic framework issues including the basic circulation pattern, amount and location of open space, and underlying block structure. She said that ultimately “three or so” design options will be developed based on feedback on these five conceptual approaches. Margot Long added that some ideas were pulled from the design charrette.

The presentation began by framing the Design Phase of the master plan and by connecting the project’s Guiding Principles to emerging visions and articulated strategies and features. John Rowell noted that it is often easiest for people to advocate for specific features, because they are concrete and discrete elements. John and Kaarin explained that while much of the public feedback addresses individual features, the master plan will focus primarily on the redevelopment principles, vision and strategies. Specific features are most often realized through the initiative of individuals and community organizations.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the CAT was asked for their feedback. Those comments included:

- Enormous 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue redevelopment potential but may consider extend site into downtown via Broadway instead as that part of downtown is thriving
- Great Street envisions more of a civic core, which may or may not exist
- Midgley building should come down – blocks view of site (looking north from High Street)
- Connectivity has to be visual
- Every scheme emphasizes a railroad crossing at Ferry Street, over 8<sup>th</sup>. Why? Will railroad allow? Better access to site.
- Often nicer to walk along a riverfront that has activity
- Need a scheme that favors the current reality
- Would there be a scheme that requires buildings to create the block pattern?
- What’s the best way to move into the site? – needs to feel “lived in”
- Focus on visual circulation
- Seems like existing buildings were compiled into something else and didn’t stand alone
- The City Grids option works for me
- Any thought of bringing the millrace into the riparian edge zone?
- Circulation of bike system – how far away are existing bridges from each other? (may steal people away from one side of the river)
- Don’t like idea of vehicle traffic through the Organic Plaza option
- Like open space of Organic Plaza but concerned about being conscious about buildings and width of streets – need to think far enough in advance about open space/block pattern relationship
- Streets – long-term thinking and caution about too much roadway (tying into grid)
- River Bow and Green Fingers options make more sense in terms of streets

- Like half mile loop with bridge – fits with 50-year goal (bring river to downtown)
- Don't like road in front of steam plant in the City Green option (many CAT members agreed with this)
- Organic Plaza option - buildings block view of river
- I like any option that brings the river to the site
- Make the first story of a building a certain height and then be flexible after that
- Like buildings sliding under the viaduct – viaduct forms a break
- Make Alton Baker Park loop a reality – then green space may be less important (tradeoff)
- New bridge across river – “not economic,” but down the road, could become a positive thing - I look at it as a possible pathway to get overhead power lines off the river (economic and health benefit)
- Like the big green space, but tying that to the South Portland development I feel is NOT what to do
- Some options have too much street for the amount of area but strong circulation path
- Great Street - same thing but with less streets
- Circulation in City Grid makes sense – almost a natural plaza that could be opened up
- City Grid is only one that stepped back and didn't have continual flow
- Worried about millrace and a water source – without water source, we don't have millrace. Think outside the box about where water comes from – maybe an existing pump station. Can we take water out of the Willamette at any other spot?
- Fingers option – existing riverside bike path – concern about pulling too far into site
- Railroad crossing is for the railroad – not for pedestrians

Ellen Teninty commented that the opening slide of this presentation that showed a chart of strategies, vision, etc. will be a great tool for informing the public.

Margot Long commented that the team is studying whether stormwater could provide enough continual flow for a millrace feature on-site.

#### 8. November Meeting Dates/Times

CAT meetings will be held on the second and third Wednesdays in November to accommodate the Thanksgiving holiday.

The CAT confirmed the following meeting dates:

- Tuesday, November 10 – Second major public event from 6:00-8:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 11 – CAT meeting – John Ellis and Margot Long will be present for download from public outreach event
- Wednesday, November 18 – CAT meeting

Ellen Teninty noted that a revised meeting schedule will be sent to the CAT in the next week or so.

It was also noted that the October 28 meeting has been changed to a 5:00 start in order to allow more time to prepare for the November 10 public event.

In closing, Tom Hoyt asked the visiting design team for a critique on how the CAT has done thus far. Margot Long replied that she thinks the process is great and that there has been great communication among the team. She noted an impressive level of commitment from the CAT, and that she doesn't have any issues whatsoever.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

**Next Meeting:            Wednesday, October 28  
                                 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.  
                                 EWEB Board Room**