

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

Wednesday, November 11, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

EWEB Board Room

Present: Dave Hauser, Tom Hoyt, Mark Johnson, Dean Pape', Mary Unruh, members; Bob Cassidy, EWEB Commissioner; Mark Oberle and Jeannine Parisi, EWEB staff; Greg Brokaw, Kaarin Knudson and John Rowell, Rowell Brokaw Architects; Margot Long, PWL Partnership; John Ellis and Madeleine Zayas-Mart, WRT Urban Design; Julie Fischer and Ellen Teninty, T'NT Consulting; Vicki Maxon, Recorder; Lorri Nelson, public.

Absent: Pat Johnston, Desiree Moore, Anita Van Asperdt, Gary Wildish

### 1. Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review

Dave Hauser welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda.

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

EWEB Commissioner Bob Cassidy said he is happy to see that a bridge to Alton Baker Park may be part of the design, but noted that EWEB probably won't cover the cost of that improvement. He asked the CAT to keep in mind what will be done with the EWEB property in the future, and he said he hoped a conversation about whether or not to section off portions of the property for sale, or turn it over to a development trust would be part of a future discussion.

### 3. Debrief November 10 Public Meeting #2

John Rowell and Kaarin Knudson led a discussion about the November 10 public meeting. Rowell Brokaw Architects noted that more than 220 people attended the event, and that dozens of people stayed to compliment the design team and share their positive thoughts about the evening after the event concluded. John noted that tonight's CAT meeting is a starting point for the CAT to provide vision statements based on the preliminary input from last night's public meeting, which will be used to continue the design process. Kaarin added that tonight's discussion is the first step toward a single framework, and that the single framework will be the topic of a more detailed discussion at the November 18 CAT meeting.

Tom Hoyt noted Commissioner Cassidy's comment regarding public ownership of the EWEB property and said he would like to understand where the process does that conversation occur, , and if there is more than one option.

Dean Pape' asked how the public ownership option would be reflected in the plan, as the City of Eugene has the option to purchase the property and he believes it would more likely be privately owned. He added that he believes it is the CAT's responsibility to say that they have listened to the public, worked the options, and then ask the City of Eugene to approve the master plan.

Tom Hoyt noted that he has a great desire to see collaboration between EWEB and all of its neighbors.

A discussion ensued regarding public vs. private ownership and the river setback, Greenway application, and restoration efforts. Kaarin Knudson said that the master plan needs to be completed regardless of the property disposal strategy pursued by EWEB. The framework of roads, open space and block structure—as well as the public engagement process—that the CAT has been appointed to guide are not determined or affected by the ownership or, for example, whether a development commission is in place. To this point, Kaarin also noted that multiple strategies for the property's responsible disposal and the related funding mechanisms would be outlined in the master plan. Kaarin added that the CAT cannot determine who owns the property; its work is to recommend a master plan to the EWEB Board for approval.

Mark Oberle noted that EWEB is installing a new underground line for the University of Oregon, from Willamette Substation to the Oregon Research Institute property and that this will require a new easement.

#### 4. Feedback on Design Options

John Rowell and Kaarin Knudson asked the CAT for feedback regarding the three design options that were presented at last night's public meeting. A list is below:

##### Option 1 – City Green

- Trees block view of the river
- Concern not enough of an urban experience on the river

##### Option 2 – Organic Plaza

- Concern about interference with setback
- Impact on City of Eugene concerns regarding hydrology

##### Option 3 – River Bow

- Like it, but the central courtyard area is lost
- Liked it until I found out there was a road along the river

Dean Pape' commented that there was a long discussion in the group he facilitated regarding the millrace and why its location wasn't clear in any of the designs. John Rowell reminded the CAT that the design team had been given direction to include the Millrace as an optional feature, in keeping with the Project Assumptions. Its placement in three different locations in the design options was an attempt to generate feedback about the preferred location.

Jeannine Parisi and several CAT members listed the following issues from their groups:

- Like the idea of the millrace – want to parallel 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue

- Connection of 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues as the main access made the most sense with the road in the middle
- Like another pedestrian bridge to Alton Baker Park
- Focus was on having a beer by the river or living by the river
- Concerns about access
- Didn't like a road next to the river

A discussion ensued regarding incorporating the millrace into a design option. Tom Hoyt noted that he wanted to accentuate the river as much as possible, even if it meant less attention on the Millrace.

Mary Unruh reminded the CAT about the concerns about the railroad noise impacting certain development options that were raised during the design charrette. She asked if it would be feasible to lower the crossing and cover it with a less steep grade.

A discussion ensued regarding existing quiet zone and train whistle issues. Ellen Teninty noted that the City of Eugene has tried to incorporate a quiet zone for approximately 12 years and has not yet been successful.

Dave Hauser asked whether a pro forma statement will be performed for each option. A brief discussion was held regarding that, and the design team indicated that the CAT would receive more information about feasibility, particularly as the single design direction is developed and refined. Kaarin Knudson reminded the CAT that actual values of property are determined by the market, so the analysis that the CAT receives will be responsible estimates, not guarantees.

John Rowell continued his presentation with a slide that listed a summary of general comments from the November 10 public meeting's small-group discussions.

Dave Hauser asked how to flush out majority vs. minority issues in order to avoid polarization. Julie Fischer said it would be important to address divergent views to see if they can be bridged.

John Rowell and Kaarin Knudson said the design team had reviewed the notes from the small table discussions to see if there were some common ideas to lead them into the next phase of the design. The following preliminary vision concepts were identified:

- Urban city meets natural river
- Public and private realms established
- Vibrant café/sidewalk social scene
- Dense, mixed use district
- Complete Great Street Loop
- Bridge two sides of river
- Authentic place with layers to past and future
- Weave urban river access with riparian continuity
- Interlace fingers of urban river with river green
- Eco-district promotes sustainable urbanism

- Feasible framework with no fatal flaws

Tom Hoyt noted that Commissioner Cassidy had to leave early, and had asked Tom to share his vision statement—Gateway to the Park.

Tom also commented that the November 10 public event was the best public forum he had attended in 45 years. He was impressed with the public meeting and how everyone was respectful of one another's opinions, that the participants gave up three hours of their personal time to attend, and that the process was inclusive rather than exclusive.

Mark Johnson agreed, and thanked everyone for their efforts.

## 5. Next Steps

Kaarin Knudson reminded the CAT that they would be presenting the recommendation for a single framework to the EWEB Board on January 19. She noted that the November 18 CAT meeting discussion would be the first step toward consensus on a single framework at the December 9 CAT meeting.

Tom Hoyt commented that it is imperative at this point in the process that the CAT has full participation from all members, and that he is concerned that four members are absent from tonight's meeting. He added that he feels it is their responsibility to get up to speed on what has taken place at meetings they are absent from.

Ellen Teninty voiced concern about the timeline for the public engagement plan, specifically regarding the three design options being available for public comment over a three-month period.

A discussion ensued regarding the best way to present the three design options at gatherings such as Rotary Club, while continuing the design work. Greg Brokaw emphasized that this is a refinement process and that the goal is to narrow the three options to one option.

Jeannine Parisi said it would be a good idea to revisit the timeline and the MOU requirements to determine when a single framework is absolutely necessary, and that staff would bring those dates to the next CAT meeting.

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

**Next Meeting:            Wednesday, November 18  
                                 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
                                 EWEB Board Room**