



Meeting Summary **MEETING NAME – Neighborhood Meeting #1**
Date **DATE – February 22, 2011**
Location **LOCATION – Garden Home Recreation Center**

Meeting Agenda

- Welcome
- Introduction to Team, Project and Process
- Review of Existing Conditions
- Park Discussion
- Review of Plan Options
- Design Discussion
- Next Steps – Schedule

Introduction

Fifteen neighbors and interested park patrons attended this public meeting for Vista Brook Park Improvements. Steve Gulgren of THPRD opened by giving a brief overview of the 2008 Bond, outlining the variety of projects funded by the bond. Patty Freeman, the THPRD project manager, provided the project history, noting that this was the first of two planned public meetings. The purpose of this meeting was to present park conditions, opportunities and constraints, and preliminary design options, as well as gather information from the neighborhood.

Natural Resources Overview

Kyle Spinks gave a brief overview of the Natural Resource component of the project, noting that all work will be within the wetland and vegetated buffer. There will be no work to drain or fill the pond, as it would trigger expensive federal permits, and the District owns only 1/3rd of the pond.

Kyle described that the park's canopy is in 'good' condition, but the understory was 'fair, at best'. Kyle stated that the removal of blackberry bushes and purple loosestrife, and the planting of native species, would be the focus of the Natural Resource project

Question: How will the BES sewer project affect the park?

Response: According to BES, no work will be done that will affect Vista Brook Park.

Q: Would the District consider leaving the vegetation to shield views of the BES pump station?

R: Staff will investigate.

Q: What trees would be removed as part of the Vista Brook renovation?

R: Possibly remove the cottonwoods that are damaging the tennis courts, but nothing has been decided.

Q: Why isn't the Fanno Creek Trail open yet? BES is failing taxpayers, THPRD should speak up for the park users.

R: Staff will continue to work with BES to assure FCT is officially open ASAP.

Q: Thank you for addressing the invasive species, will holly be included?

R: Not with this project, which is focusing on the vegetated corridor and wetland, but the NR department is open to working with citizen volunteer groups to address specific issues.

Q: Where can neighbors volunteer to assist in mitigation?

R: Contact John Gaddis, who is here tonight.

Q: Why can't the District buy the pond from neighbors, they would be likely to sell. Invasives are in those areas too, and cannot be eradicated by treating only part of the wetland.

R: Staff will investigate.

Q: The pond has filled up with silt over the years, is this sediment from runoff?

R: It's likely a combination of causes. The floods since 1996 have added a significant amount of sediment to the pond, but street runoff may have contributed as well.

Site History and Culture

David Walters gave a quick overview of the site history, noting the Oregon Electric Line and the Portland Riding Club as having strong influence on the neighborhood and the park site. These cultural themes could be used in interpretive signage or other park amenities.

Group Discussion Summary

Park Needs Discussion:

- Loop Path is good
- Basketball Courts – options for families/smaller baskets, but further from homes – It provides a recreation opportunity to draw racial diversity into the park
- No parking expansion – Never seen it full – Parking is perceived as linked to bad behavior, the site doesn't need a parking lot
- Fanno Creek Trail link
- Open space to run around in
- Tennis Courts are popular

- Foot Traffic is the primary way to access the park
- Neighborhood Picnics should be supported
- Wall Ball – useful/problematic, restricts sight line, safety, and vandalism, popular and many would like to retain
- Play area - provide for a wider age range
- Design of park should allow for good sight lines to minimize problem behavior
- Pond is a positive and should have safe access for kids
- They like the natural resources, habitat and want the duck boxes returned
- Provide interpretation/education/signs
- Trail will have vegetation work to remove hazard trees and invasive species
- Provide tree replacement for canopy renewal as some trees are in decline
- The boardwalk is dangerous/slippery
- Keep the lilacs

Design Discussion:

- The majority of attendees were concerned that the Community Garden (CG) would generate more traffic. They felt that traffic in the summer would be greater if there is a CG. They bought in a cul-de-sac so it would be safe for kids to play in the street. There was a concern about the availability of CG for neighbors first. Neighbors already have gardens if they want at the homes and it would only be for apartment dwellers.
- The attendees liked the idea of eliminating the gravel road to Fanno Trail and retaining open space
- Prefer retaining all basketball courts. Provide two basket heights for young and older users. Move the courts farther south away from homes. An option is where the play area is shown on option 1. The wall between the courts does a good job of separating older kids on one court and younger kids on the other court. The wall might not be needed if there was more space between the two courts.
- Keep the porta-potty close to the Fanno Creek Trail and ADA compliant.
- Provide trail loop options. Tennis players liked the paved path around the courts, could watch kids ride their bikes while playing tennis.
- Provide a means for kids to access the pond (viewing platform was something they liked).
- The CG is too close to the tennis courts, balls will land in the gardens. If a community garden is included, neighbors within walking distance should get priority to minimize car trips.
- Has the district reached out to the Apartment dwellers? How to reach them more affectively?
- Can the light be brighter and can there be more lights throughout the park for safety and reduction of negative behavior? THPRD's policy is that parks close at dusk, we seldom provide park lighting. Don't light the basketball courts.

- Interested in more picnic tables, but not necessarily a larger picnic area.
- Provide a play area that meets the full range of kid ages and is creative with focus on nature. Check out the OES play area.
- SW 88th Avenue is a steep hill and traffic goes faster than it should at times.
- Minimal parking is needed for the park. The attendees did not think there was ever not enough parking at the existing lot and a few times it might spill over into the street parking.
- There was no opposition to removal of the deciduous trees down the middle of the site. The attendees did not think the conifers adjacent the tennis courts are a problem. In fact they were placed there originally to provide a buffer to the adjacent homes. Can THPRD provide broom for cleaning the vegetative debris if it is a problem?
- The attendees requested that THPRD be proactive during any planning efforts that BES and CWS have for sewer plans along Fanno Creek that affect the Park and the Trail.
- Can water be added to the Pond in the summer when it becomes dry? Can THPRD remove sediment from the Pond since it has silted up over the years? Unauthorized Fanno Creek water draw?
- Several attendees voiced concern about the park having an off leash area.