

## MEETING NOTES

<b>Meeting Topic and Number:</b>	Waterfront Committee Meeting No. 1
<b>Meeting Date &amp; Time:</b>	7/27/2015; 3:00 – 5:30 PM
<b>Project #:</b>	0830.04.01
<b>Project Name:</b>	St. Helens AWP
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	City of St. Helens Council Chambers
<b>Recorded By:</b>	Lauren Wirtis (MFA) & Saumya Kini (WM)
<b>Attendees:</b>	<p>Committee Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Howard Blumenthal, Parks Commission</li> <li>• Diane Dillard, Arts Commission</li> <li>• Ashley Baggett, Public Health</li> <li>• Gainor Riker, Business Owner</li> <li>• Margaret Jeffries, Library Director</li> <li>• Anya Moucha, SHEDCO Mainstreet Coordinator</li> <li>• Randy Peterson, Mayor</li> <li>• Susan Conn, City Councilor</li> <li>• Douglas Morten, City Council President</li> <li>• Keith Locke, City Councilor</li> <li>• Susan Conn, City Councilor</li> <li>• Ginny Carlson, City Councilor</li> </ul> <p>Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Walsh, City of St. Helens</li> <li>• Jenny Dimsho, City of St. Helens</li> <li>• Jacob Graichen, City of St. Helens</li> <li>• Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director</li> <li>• Neal Sheppard, Public Works Operations Director</li> <li>• Seth Otto, MFA</li> <li>• Lauren Wirtis, MFA</li> <li>• Mike Zillis, WalkerMacy</li> <li>• Ken Pirie, WalkerMacy</li> <li>• Saumya Kini, WalkerMacy</li> <li>• Karen Homolac, Oregon Business Development Dept.</li> </ul>
<b>Distribution:</b>	<b>Attendees and absent Committee members</b>

### General Topic 1: Meeting Start-Up

John Walsh welcomed Committee members to the first Waterfront Committee Meeting for the Area-Wide Planning (AWP) process. Meeting participants, City staff, and the consultant team introduced themselves.

## **General Topic 2: Project Recap**

Seth Otto described where the Veneer and BWP properties are in the overall planning process. He provided a detailed description of the master planning process, the outcomes of the AWP program (framework plan and demonstration plan), and the timeline and key events of the AWP program.

## **General Topic 3: Review the Existing Conditions Report**

Seth Otto reviewed the key findings from the existing conditions report for physical conditions, environmental assessment, utilities, transportation and land use, demographics, and market conditions. He then reviewed the uses and amenities that had been prioritized by the Committee and the community during the Integrated Planning Grant process.

### Committee Comments

The Committee expressed concern about the ramifications of new amenities on the Veneer property in terms of displacement of low-income residents currently residing in the historic downtown. Seth said that an approach to mitigate displacement of current populations due to increases in property value would be discussed in the framework plan.

The Committee also expressed the desire for employers to come before the boutiques, and the desire for “gentle industry.” Seth acknowledged the importance of bringing more jobs to St. Helens so that fewer people commuted out of the town to work. However, he noted that some amenities would need to be present first in order to attract employers to the area.

## **General Topic 4: Discuss Opportunities and Constraints**

Ken Pirie reviewed the core values and some of the opportunities and constraints that were present on the Veneer property.

### Committee Comments

The Committee raised the issue of the repercussions of creating more development in the water. Increased sedimentation has caused a slowing of the current and is already impacting current businesses and marinas in the area. The river has not been dredged in a long time, which may be contributing as well. In Scappoose Bay, dredging was able to mitigate for this same issue. Ken said that this issue would be considered in the framework plan.

The Committee also noted that employment uses should be suited to the Veneer property (e.g. boat servicing, brewer, and live-work), but that the BWP property can serve the need for industrial land. The Committee thought it was important to create places to congregate, a mix of uses, and accommodate emergency access into planning of the Veneer property. The Committee suggested looking into the significant historical quarry/live spring on the BWP property, called “Pigeon Springs” that is now a pond used by vector control for breeding insects.

## **General Topic 5: Interactive Planning Exercise**

Saumya Kini explained the chip exercise materials and how the exercise would work.

Each table had a large, to-scale map of the Veneer site and some of the surrounding area with site characteristics labeled, such as nearby parks, stairs leading to the site, the 100-year floodplain, and different options for greenway setbacks. On the table were “chips,” which included specific uses that were sized to-scale (e.g. light industrial and mixed use) and other elements (e.g. habitat and plaza) that were round and not to scale as they represented ideas rather than development types. There were road chips that included two lanes, parking, and sidewalks on one side, and had a pedestrian path on the other side. String was available to demonstrate where a trail would go and post-it notes were available to add comments to the scheme.

Mike Zillis presented some precedent images of the types of uses and other elements shown on the chips, and then the exercise began.

### Table 1 - Comments

#### **Ideas/Issues**

- There was some interest in establishing a ferry for people to get to Sand Island and Sauvie Island. Some participants were concerned about the capacity for Sand Island to accommodate large numbers of visitors.
- The whole table agreed that a floating restaurant would be a desirable attractor for the property.
- There was disagreement about the amount of greenway needed along the boardwalk. Version #1 shows 100-foot setback for the greenway, whereas other versions are closer to 25-50 feet. The table did agree that the greenway should be wider at the north end where it will connect to Columbia Park
- There were mixed ideas about how much parking should be available and where. Some people argued that residents want to park their car and watch the river. Most participants thought that parking should not be present on the waterfront edge.
- Participants wanted to create a sense of progression in terms of housing type from the historic downtown to the south end of the site, starting with townhomes and then transitioning to walk-ups and multi-family housing
- Participants agreed that the boat marina and moorage should be at the south end of the site.

### Table 2 Comments

- The participants thought lodging was desirable on the site.

- The participants wanted to expand the existing Columbia View Park and thought that the current area was not a sufficient size.
- Participants expressed that the consultant team should prioritize the most affordable type of units for any multi-family residential.
- Participants raised the example of a “greened” solar-powered parking garage in Lake Oswego. While they said they understand that structured parking not deemed economically viable, they thought it merited exploration. Structured parking could include public restrooms.
- Scheme includes central view corridor out to a dock with attractions such a large plaza that would act as gathering place.
- Live-work uses should be located along the trail since some types of live-work will benefit from the foot traffic.
- The participants wanted to create a sense of procession through the site from north to south, and to place uses at entry points that make sense and interface well with downtown.
- Participants thought the trestle was a very special feature that should be celebrated as a bike trail that connects to a park/natural area with habitat just south of the Veneer property. There is a huge birdwatching opportunity there, as the sewage treatment area attracts birds.

#### Common Themes

- A marina was placed at the south end of the property.
- Taller buildings were placed in the middle and toward the back of the property.
- Street either hugged the bluff, swept wide closer to the river, or hugged the bluff and then jogged to meet River Street.
- Greenway was largely deemed an important feature with only a few participants saying a large green space was not necessary.
- None of the schemes placed private development on the waterfront edge.
- Both teams developed a scheme with on-water development.

#### **Action Items:**

<b>Item Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Date Due</b>
1	Synthesize ideas into two or three options for the next Committee meeting	WalkerMacy	Next Meeting
2	Send out information about the next meeting date and time.	City	2/19/16

