

Design and Landmarks Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 18, 2009

Members Present

Becky Ives, Chair
Siri Bernard, Vice Chair
Greg Hemer
Patty Wisner

Members Absent

Sarah Knaup

Staff Present

Brett Kelter, Associate Planner (DLC Liaison)
Katie Mangle, Planning Director
Ryan Marquardt, Associate Planner
Li Alligood, Assistant Planner

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Becky Ives called the Design and Landmarks Committee (DLC) meeting to order at 5:47 p.m., following a joint meeting with the City Council.

2. MEETING MINUTES

a. July 22, 2009

DLC Member Greg Hemer moved to accept the July 22, 2009, meeting minutes as presented. **DLC Member Patty Wisner** seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Meeting transcription

Brett Kelter, Associate Planner, informed the Committee that due to budget cuts, Paula Pinyerd from ABC Transcription Services would only attend formal application reviews in the future.

Li Alligood, Assistant Planner, would prepare meeting minutes for worksessions and regular meetings during the 2009/2010 fiscal year. These minutes would be less detailed and more of a summary than the minutes for formal application reviews.

4. WORKSESSION ITEMS

a. Preparation for Riverfront Park application

Mr. Kelter explained that the purpose of the evening's meeting was to hold an informal worksession to explore potential questions or points of clarification to be addressed by the applicant prior to the official application review.

Ryan Marquardt, Associate Planner, presented the conceptual plan for the Riverfront Park application to be reviewed by the Committee in September. He stated that the application was

very significant because it was the first priority in the Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Land Use Framework Plan adopted in 2000. He explained that the role of a waterfront park for recreation and community identity could not be understated, and that this application review would be an exciting milestone for downtown revitalization.

Katie Mangle, Planning Director, pointed out that the worksession would be different from the Trolley Trail application review in that the worksession component would be totally separated from design review. The purpose of the worksession was to talk about the process of the application review rather than the actual project. She stated that the official Committee review of the application would follow a public meeting format, which would begin with the staff report, followed by testimony from the applicant and the public, and concluding with Committee deliberation and decision.

Mr. Marquardt provided an overview of the Riverfront Park site. The site is zoned Downtown Open Space (DOS) and is located within the Willamette Greenway overlay (WG). The proposal would close the current access to the Jefferson Street boat ramp, which would be moved farther south. The park would contain a festival lawn, an amphitheater, a play area, a boat ramp, a pavilion, restrooms, and parking. It is unclear at this point how severe the slope of the festival lawn, if any, might be. The uses for the festival lawn are still under discussion but do not currently include the Milwaukie Farmers Market.

The Committee asked if electricity would be available in the amphitheater for performers.

Mr. Marquardt stated that he did not know if there was electricity, and that he would look into the question.

Mr. Hemer identified several areas that he would like more information about: how long/wide the proposed boat ramp is and how many people can stand on it; how many parking spaces are being removed and replaced at the park; and how many parking spaces are currently available for the existing boat ramp. He noted concerns about on-site maneuvering for vehicles towing boats.

Chair Ives noted that during festivals in the park, the boat ramp would essentially be closed down and that most boat owners would prefer a pull-through parking stall rather than the pull-in parking stalls proposed.

Mr. Marquardt noted that the design was conceptual and, in fact, the current proposal differed from the concept being shown.

Chair Ives showed images of the Wilsonville Water Park and stated that the water feature at Riverfront Park should be designed for children to play in it; she suggested that such a feature could draw people and their families downtown on the weekends, particularly in the summer.

Chair Ives expressed concern about the amphitheater design and the proposal to show movies on the wall of the proposed bathroom structure; she pointed out the reverse slope toward the river and noted that the slope was the opposite of what showing movies would seem to call for.

The Committee noted that the proposed water feature appeared very urban and hard-edged, and that it would prefer to see something with a more natural appearance that utilizes materials such as stone rather than brick or concrete.

Ms. Mangle suggested Committee members visit Tanner Springs Park in Portland; it is a park in a very urban area that provides a contrast between natural and man-made features.

Mr. Kelper asked how the Committee would distinguish its general responses to the proposed project from its official review of the design, since all of the Committee's findings must be connected to the Milwaukie Downtown Design Guidelines (Design Guidelines).

Mr. Marquardt presented a discussion of the Design Guidelines to be considered: Milwaukie Character Guidelines, Pedestrian Emphasis Guidelines, Architecture Guidelines, Lighting Guidelines, and Sign Guidelines. He stated that the key guideline, in his opinion, was the Milwaukie Character Guideline. He stated that he was interested in additional information about the pedestrian bridge design due to its prominence in the park.

Ms. Mangle stated that the current plans are at 70% design and it was unlikely that significant changes such as relocating the parking lots would be made; however, there would be many design details that the Committee could influence.

Mr. Marquardt asked the Committee members which areas of the site they were most concerned with and suggested that the applicant might be able to supply 3-D renderings of these areas.

The Committee indicated that it would like to see renderings of the water feature, the bathroom structure, the pedestrian bridge, the play structure, and any historical or way-finding signage.

Mr. Kelper stated that if the Committee was not comfortable with the level of detail presented at the application review, it could recommend a condition to have the final plans referred back to the Committee after the Planning Commission hearing.

Ms. Mangle stated that the Committee could choose to continue the application review in order to obtain more detail from the applicant, but the criterion for recommendation was substantial conformance with the Design Guidelines rather than complete compliance.

The Committee took a break at 6:53 p.m. and reconvened at 7:15 p.m.

Chair Ives asked whether a Committee request for redrawn designs from the applicant would be part of the natural flow of a project, or would it throw a wrench in a fast-track schedule?

Mr. Marquardt responded that these types of requests were often part of the natural flow of a project.

Ms. Mangle stated that the Committee could condition its recommendation to allow the project to continue while also addressing the concerns of the Committee. She stated that the Committee should seek to strike a balance between influencing the final design and changing things outright or recommending denial of the application; denial would be a very hard stance to take and the Committee should be aware of the potential ramifications. She stated that the design would not be changed before the Committee review but there would still be opportunity for input.

Chair Ives noted that she had attended a Riverfront Committee meeting and shared the Committee's concerns about the water feature, and that the architect had indicated the design would not change. She expressed concerns about the potential future expense if the City did not plan for things such as children playing in the fountain and a sound system for the amphitheater.

The Committee agreed that the Riverfront Park was a very important project that would be in place for many years, and the members felt a responsibility to ensure the project was the best it could be.

Ms. Mangle suggested that, while the Committee would be reviewing the proposal according to the Design Guidelines, the committee members could also choose to write a separate letter expressing their concerns and wishes for the park.

The Riverfront Park application review was tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 23, 2009, at 6:30 p.m.

b. Continued discussion on urban design

Vice Chair Siri Bernard and **Chair Ives** provided photos for discussion. The Committee favored way-finding signage, sidewalk and hanging planters in the downtown area, and unique buildings with context-appropriate design.

5. APPLICATION REVIEW ITEMS—None

6. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Update on Jackson Street Bus Shelter project

Ms. Mangle provided an update. The open house earlier in August was fairly successful; there was no negative feedback and some positive feedback from attendees. She reiterated that green roofs on the shelter were possible and that the overall project was still promising.

b. Historic properties slide show

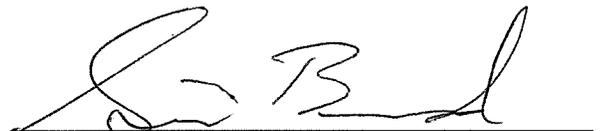
Ms. Mangle informed the Committee that the City's arts organization, ArtMob, has proposed a project similar to the historic properties slide show. They were working with a web design class at Milwaukie High School; **Ms. Mangle** suggested that the Committee might be able to utilize that type of resource as well.

Vice Chair Bernard suggested that City Councilor Deborah Barnes might be willing have her students assist with the project.

Ms. Mangle suggested that if **Ms. Wisner** could provide a framework for the historic properties slide show, City staff could assist with adding images and reduce **Ms. Wisner's** time commitment.

7. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.


Becky Ives, Chair Siri Bernard, Vice Chair