

January 10, 2006
Riverfront Board Meeting Minutes

Attending: Michael Martin, Dave Green, Gary Klein, Shane St.Clair, Mitch Wall, Terrie Darling

Absent: Mike Stacey

Visitors: Councilor Joe Loomis

Approval of previous minutes: Approved Sept. 13th—Herrigel noted there had been no comments from those that were at the meeting. Gary made motion and Shane seconded. Motion passed 6-0. December meeting: Correction: Mitch Wall was in favor of delaying discussion of the data implications, he was not against getting it to City Council.

Discussion:

JoAnn explained that they had a lot to get through and wanted the meeting to stay focused. She noted that this also allowed Dave to participate. She said she would try to keep things on track—items deemed off track would need to be tabled for discussion at another time. JoAnn explained that Mike Stacey was recovering from surgery and could not make the meeting but had provided her with a statement to read at the appropriate time. Mitch asked if he could get a copy of Mike’s statement and JoAnn indicated she would make copies and give them out while she was reading them.

JoAnn started by giving a summary of the survey data as displayed on flipchart.

Next she asked for Board comments on data:

Dave suggested that survey results not be called “votes”—he preferred they be called “feedback.”

Michael asked if 11% was a good response. JoAnn replied that 3% is typically considered good/normal.

JoAnn asked the group: “Do you think anything is wrong with the data as summarized here?” No comments were made about the summary itself.

Next Herrigel asked if the Board had any additions to the list of data implications:

Shane commented that the majority of respondents (the 75% that chose concept #2) gave feedback that their number one concern was on-site parking. He noted that even those who chose concept #1 also wanted on-site parking (.2 percent difference from picnic facilities.) ***Hence, he concluded, on-site parking is a very important issue for all the people that responded.***

Gary Klein noted that boat ramp, boat dock, and picnic facilities all rated very close together for the majority of people that responded (that chose #2). He also noted that people coming from outside the City seem to be coming here to use the boat ramp.

Shane commented that the majority inside the City also chose boating facilities to support that use.

Dave commented that he did not think the group should just look at what those choosing concept #2 wanted and did not think they could be called the overall majority. He thought that they should instead look at all respondents (both #1 and #2 choosers together) and see what they want—what everybody wants. He noted that to all respondents picnic facilities, on-site parking, boat dock, and open space are all highly rated. He noted that it seems there continues to be competition for use of what is in reality a very small and constrained space. He commented that this induced him to want to try and create multiple uses of that space rather than create winners/losers.

Mitch commented that results indicate we are trying to do too much/too much congestion on the Riverfront, particularly in the area of the boat ramp. *He said that in reading comments many indicated concerns about parking being in the middle of the concept because folks thought this was unsafe.* It seemed that they wanted to move the parking outside of middle of concept—not necessarily move the ramp but move the parking.

Shane commented that it is very encouraging to him that **very few people chose either/no concept. This led him to believe that most people did not want to scrap the concepts altogether**—were OK with both concepts.

JoAnn read Mike’s comments—Mike’s general message was that the board should develop a concept that reflects survey results.

Mitch asked to explain the two handwritten bullets at the bottom of Mike’s statement. JoAnn explained that she added those after talking with Mike and asking him some follow up questions. Mitch asked if Mike is saying leave the parking where it is or leave the same number of spaces—JoAnn replied that he had said both.

Mitch commented that after reading the comments there were only a few that would leave the parking just the way it is—and only a few would add more to the existing amount.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

JoAnn asked the group “What would we tell someone to do with this data? What are the policy implications?”

Michael:

We need the same number of parking spaces-but look at how to redistribute them.

Design to “soften” parking so it has uses other than just parking—leaving it open for other uses (e.g. consider drainage/use pavers or the like.)

Mitch wanted to clarify whether on-site parking included the log dump—if this is what the public was shown. After discussion the group concluded that that most of them (5 out of 6 present) had considered the log-dump area as on-site rather than off-site parking. Off-site parking to the group meant parking either on McLoughlin Blvd.(which is not allowed) or on a nearby street or parking area.

Michael commented that he did not think Mike Stacey was advocating the footprint of the parking lot remain exactly the same. Dave commented that he did not think that Mike’s plan showed where parking was located and JoAnn agreed that Mike’s drawing did not specify the exact location of parking spaces.

Shane: One policy implication is to separate the parking from the picnic facilities but make sure both are adequate. He commented that picnic facilities and on-site parking were very highly regarded by all respondents so the design should make sure that both parking and picnic facilities are provided.

Michael: One policy implication could be to move parking away from river—data did not indicate where that parking had to be.

Dave commented that parking is a huge issue in Milwaukie—period. Commented that he did not see a directive to keep the same number of spaces in the same location. Handful said they want more parking than is there today. Terrie commented that comments indicated that on-site parking was important.

Terrie had suggestion—take number that is there now (in concept #2) and add a couple more spaces. Folks wanted more parking so just add a couple more up to 10 or 12 (this is less than is currently at the boat ramp?)

JoAnn asked—what implications are there for log dump area? Dave commented that log-dump should be considered on-site since it is connected to park. Mitch, Shane, Michael said the off site was not shown on concept as sent to public—is somewhere else—on McLoughlin, another road or area of downtown. Shane commented—that what we do know is that people want parking somewhere on this drawing. JoAnn noted that Mike Stacey would argue that on-site parking is defined as very near boat ramp—not just shown on the drawing (the log dump is too far away...). Gary commented that the text under the Concepts suggests that off-site parking is parking at log dump. Others pointed out that 5 out of 6 in the room did not see that when they completed the survey.

Terrie suggested the group define what “on-site” parking is. Dave commented that if we improve the site we will draw even more “if we build it they will come.” If it was open space we’d draw the Auduban Society and bird lovers. He commented that there is a difference between seasonal use and year-round use and the design should reflect this.

Policy implication: Design for seasonal use of park.

JoAnn commented that non-boaters also wanted parking near boat ramp/picnic facilities between the creeks.

Shane: 75% chose concept #2 and the elements of #2 are what they wanted and we should incorporate what was shown in Concept #2. Not that we ignore what people who voted for #1 wanted but lean toward. Terrie commented that she agreed with Shane that we should not ignore the 25% that voted for #1 but should prioritize amenities from concept #2.

Gary:

Don't make too busy/crowded—don't put too much in the middle/one place. Look at alternative parking opportunities as close to park as possible—(maybe between Trolley Trail and McLoughlin or near sewage plant.) Noted that if Clearwater passed perhaps we could put parking down there. Can't put parking on McLoughlin.

Dave: Look for Trolley Trail user parking away from creeks. Noted that when this was developed they had combined the parking for both park users and Trolley Trail users. Log dump could be a good option.

Michael: Integrate boat ramp and dock into plan. Dave commented this is the clearest message from #2 voters.

OPTIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

JoAnn asked the group: “How do we take this data and integrate it and develop a final design? There needs to be a group that does it and a way that they do it.” JoAnn gave some options as listed on agenda.

Hand it over to Council carte blanche with policy directives and no design?

Riverfront board develops design and gives to Council

Create another group?

Put data out for bid—let a consultant finish. JoAnn noted this would require funding.

Dave noted that one could have resource people available in option #1 (Riverfront develops final design)too.

JoAnn wrote this on the flip chart noting this would be fourth option. The group asked what Council prefers. Councilor Joe Loomis was present and said he could only speak for himself and that he likes it when a group come forward with something they have already hashed out.

JoAnn asked if anyone simply wanted to hand it over to Council—consensus was no.

Dave commented that handing it over to a consultant might generate great ideas—but then the consultant would need direction on what stakeholders to invite for further input—that this could open the design up to a broader group of people. Terrie commented that this seemed like going through the process again. Dave disagreed—thought it would finalize a design. Terrie commented that the stakeholders should be/are the people who filled out the survey.

The group discussed the idea that the Riverfront board work on a design with resource people available and present. Several noted that this could generate some “volunteer labor” from designers, especially if the group told the experts that they might have a better shot at getting a final bid if they help give design input.

Dave noted that board would/should be responsible to solicit appropriate experts/help. JoAnn noted that if they hired a consultant right away they would still come to the Riverfront board for input. Dave thought a consultant would generate better design ideas but if the Riverfront board led the process they would have more control.

Terrie liked idea of inviting Council—so they would see the process and get buy in/prevent them rehashing things. Shane commented that the Council is invited to all Riverfront board meetings.

Dave suggested a two stage process: Have another Riverfront Board meeting to finish policy implications and then two more meetings to develop a final design concept with just Riverfront board with resource people. He suggested that the group then “check in” and answer the question “Are we going to get there by ourselves or do we need to bring in others (Parks board or facilitator or put out RFP.)”

Terrie commented that she was concerned that this process would mean data would get manipulated or disregarded. JoAnn suggested that a process with resource people could help them figure out how to incorporate the data the best way—a professional design person. Shane and Michael indicated they were optimistic they could make it work. Mitch commented that for all the time he spent on the board he was willing to give 2-3 more meetings a chance.

Shane agreed that next meeting they needed to agree on ground rules, the policy implications, and what resource people to invite. Shane suggested that everyone create a list of questions and ideas for what resource people we need.

The group agreed to go forward with Dave’s suggested two-stage process and have three more meetings. The next meeting they would come to consensus on the policy implications and discuss what further resources/experts they needed. They would then take two more meetings to try and develop a more concrete design proposal.

JoAnn agreed that minutes should be at least a week before next meeting—try to do sooner. JoAnn requested that that board members do indeed read them.

Shane motioned to adjourn and Mitch seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.