

Public Meeting on Fort Lawton

February 25, 2008

Catherine Blaine Elementary School

Magnolia Community

Questions & Answers

Answers in *Italics* are those given at the meeting. If more information or clarification is needed that follows under “Additional Staff Response.” Unless otherwise noted all respondents were City staff or partner agencies (Seattle Housing Authority (SHA), Archdiocesan Housing Authority, United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, YWCA, Habitat for Humanity, Homestead Community Land Trust and Cascade Land Conservancy).

1. Community Outreach & Involvement Questions

How will you make sure as many Magnolia community members are aware of this process and on-going meetings?

Some outreach ideas provided by community members include:

- 1. advertising in the Magnolia newspaper*
- 2. utilizing sandwich boards in the Magnolia village*
- 3. distributing / posting flyers at schools.*

The meeting was advertised in the Queen Anne Magnolia News, emails were sent out and fliers were distributed at the Magnolia Community Center. For upcoming meetings these others communication methods can be used.

2. BRAC Process Questions

Did the Army give an amount, range in compensation?

What interest does the Army have? And what will we have if the proposal is not approved?

There still sounds like no buy-in from Army.

What is in it for DOD if they do not approve a proposal that is well thought out?

The Army did not state a range or specific amount. One of the things on the reuse of Fort Lawton that the City, as the LRA, has done is recognize the Army’s stated intent to get value from Fort Lawton. We intend to develop a reuse plan that accommodates that need. We understand that some LRA’s in this BRAC round have prepared draft reuse plans that did not do this and not approved and have been told they need to redo their plans. We do not expect this to happen to our plan.

Is there a resolution to the concerns about the City stopping this process between the last meeting and this one? Is the stop and start of the BRAC process [foreshadowing the] possibility of some problems? What do you know that they [the DOD and federal entities] have done before?

The City was ready to begin the reuse plan process and hold a meeting like we are having tonight when the Army contacted us and said they wanted to talk about their intent to receive some value from their Fort Lawton property. We agreed we should meet with the Army and we put the reuse plan process on pause. We have met and talked with the Army and conversations

are still underway. The final decision on the plan will happen once the proposal is submitted to DOD and HUD and DOD makes property disposal decisions. The City requested and received an extension of the due date for the reuse plan and we are ready to begin the planning process. This BRAC is different than others and it is too soon in this round of closures to identify any precedents because we are still early in the process.

So, they've come back and said yes to local control, we agreed on what you want?

Our request for local control is part of overall discussions with the Army but they know we are building it into our reuse plan. They said that they have heard what we want and will take that into consideration. It is obviously their property so they will make the final decision.

3. Development Team Information Questions

Are these the only programs on the table? A community member stated that there may be a concern that other programs and partners may be introduced later in the process and stakeholders do not want to feel we are being left out of what is truly happening.

Are there too many partners? The property is not that big. How will it all be integrated? It concerns community members that it appears to be too many partners and not enough direction.

Tonight the City has identified the program partners to the community. We are introducing them and talking about their roles. The open period for selecting partners is closed. Federal law requires the public notice process we went through earlier; therefore, no other players can be added. An example of an entity's role/partnership would be the United Indians of All Tribes who will partner with the Archdiocesan Housing Authority (AHA). AHA will serve as the developer and United Indians will help develop culturally appropriate services and ensure respect for the land. Cascade Land Conservancy will provide services also to show respect for the land. Housing will be developed by the YWCA, Habitat for Humanity and as mentioned before, UIAT/AHA. There is no pre-determined number of units. There is an understanding amongst all program partners that trade-offs will have to be made.

4. Project Information Questions

How much is actually going to be redeveloped, for example, how much will have cement on it, etc.?

Identifying what will be developed is part of the Stakeholder Process. The City submitted to the DOD a request to maintain open space. Heron Habitat also requires eco-friendly development.

Additional staff response:

These are some of the issues to be discussed and decided in preparing the reuse plan, working with the community, consultants and partner agencies.

5. Lessons from Similar Communities Comment

Successful redevelopment sites. A community participant commented that there are examples of successful redevelopment sites that include mixed-income housing, such as Magnuson Park-Sandpoint. The projects re-used housing for homeless, in wealthy prominent neighborhoods. The community that was initially against the redevelopment is now in support of the project, which included homeless families with children. Residents who were initially against the project now feel that it is working well. Sandpoint, in Laurelhurst, is similar to Magnolia.

6. Quality Housing and Community Design Questions

What is the current zoning? Would it be rezoned? Clustering? This land has been part of the Army for a long time, not sure what the current zoning is under the City. With need for open space, and the way it may be clustered, would it be rezoned?

The current zoning is SF 7200, which allows approximately 200 units. As we move forward, we will have to balance homeless housing, self-help housing (Habitat for Humanity), market rate housing, open space and heron habitat. Likely ways to achieve this balance may be clustering, and a rezone in order to accomplish what's needed.

Additional staff response:

Clustering can be done without a rezone through a Planned Residential Development (PRD). A PRD may include townhouses. However, other attached housing (e.g. apartment buildings) would require a rezone. Townhomes would not likely be a model that could accommodate the homeless housing.

Cluster housing? There is concern about single family housing and the way that around most of the city builders/developers knock down one house and put up four homes. We don't want to see that in this project. Although the reuse will not be park, even though that is the best solution, the community doesn't want ugly cluster housing.

The partner agencies announced tonight are mission driven agencies. They have a commitment to build good communities that are livable and attractive. The advantage with this Development Team is that it is comprised of mission driven agencies. Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) was chosen because of its commitment to build good communities. It is important to build good communities that are livable and attractive so that someone will want to spend a million dollars to live there. This team wants to make sure we are building that type of community. An issue for the team is "Can you repair the land; make it better than when you started with the site?" is a question the team will work on with the community. It also must be taken into account that profits made from the property will pay for infrastructure and the affordable housing. We want to make sure we do this well, developing open space, dealing with storm water, sustaining the quality of land.

Additional staff response:

Clustered housing is not necessarily the same as townhouses. Clustered housing can be individually detached dwellings that are situated in such a way that each one does not have its own 7200 square foot lot. This can provide for protection of sensitive environmental areas on a site and help ensure larger open spaces than typical single-family development would allow.

If rezone, will there be condos or apartments on the site?

Not a foregone conclusion that there will be a rezone, but if the reuse plan calls for clustering then the City may rezone to integrate condos and apartments, and to maybe meet federal requirements.

7. Maintaining Home/Property Values Questions

How will you maintain our home/property values? One attendee stated that it was mentioned that High Point is a model neighborhood. The site wasn't so great before; however, we have high-end homes. The question is how will you maintain our home/property values?

We need to think about how we can make this an integrated community that thrives for everyone and connects to the rest of neighborhood. It is important to start with the question of Fort Lawton. If it wasn't there and the site was in a new configuration; if new use includes homeless housing and low income housing, market rate housing, open space and habitat preservation, how do we make this an integrated community that thrives for everyone and connects to the rest of neighborhood?

At Seattle Housing Authority they have been turning old dilapidated housing into new housing, so it seems a little easier and exciting to tell the former residents of the deteriorated neighborhoods how great is going to be. Homes here are probably of higher-value than in West Seattle, but looking at that it is going to be another item we should consider while working together. We need to strategize on how to continue with the home values and how to integrate new neighbors to work within the long-time established neighborhood.

Are you saying that our property values will not lessen?

National property values indicate no harm. National values, such as those in parts of Connecticut show that this should not cause harm to property values.

8. Financial Sources Questions

What's changed with the Army? And do you see this all moving forward in November, once the federal government transitions to the new administration?

The BRAC regulations and policies are set in law so we are not anticipating any change with the change in administration. Even though no dollar amount is currently confirmed, we are confident that the DOD realizes that we want to do the development well.

Where is funding coming from? City? How?

Financing for the types of housing we are talking about comes from various sources. The City is not completely financing the project. There will be infrastructure cost, so sales of market-rate housing should help pay for that. Homeless housing will come partly from the property transferred by DOD / Army, which is at no cost. When it comes to the development, there will likely be City funds used to pay for buildings.

What percentage has to be housing for homeless? Don't the federal programs have a high priority emphasis for homelessness?

The number of units and set-asides has not been determined. The City of Seattle and its partners are showing the Army that we want mixed uses and that there has to be a balance in developing the project and making it work for everybody.

9. Infrastructure Questions

Have you considered infrastructure, will there be more? Site Infrastructure Needs and Costs?

The infrastructure, identifying the needs will be a huge part of the process. Studies will be completed after hiring consultants, such as possible traffic and sewer issues.

10. Environmental Issues Questions

Is there a percentage of how much land is required or set-aside for open land?

No. That is part of the on-going conversation with the community during the Stakeholder process.

Comments from Community Member:

Think it is a grave mistake to build/develop in the park, *degrading the park* and making a bad decision for the future. The property belongs to Seattle. It should all become park. Every tree in the park and every bird should remain and be protected. Fort Lawton should be like Presidio in San Francisco. It is now a beautiful park. In order to do that, the people of San Francisco had to organize and we should do that here and not just some high-density plan that developers make money on.

Fort Lawton is not in Discovery Park. The Fort Lawton property was not given by the City rather a private entity similar to the Chamber of Commerce provided the land to the Army to create Fort Lawton. Also clarifying that Fort Lawton is not inside Discovery Park.

Will this project damage heron habitat and exotic, native vegetation? A participant speaking from Heron Habitat Helpers stated that they want all housing constructed only in areas already with no trees. It appears that some of the proposal is in areas that will damage habitat, such as specific trees.

The development team is committed to protecting trees and wildlife during reuse development. The trees in the north are already in an environmentally protected area.. That's part of the process; we need to include this in our conversations.

At High Point, SHA had an arborist do a survey allowing identification and protection of trees and what is below the trees – the tree roots. There is not a lot of desire to develop much of the area covered with trees, as they are especially deep-sloped areas.

11. Public Safety Questions

Will there be more police coverage for the population growth? Does the Police Department have a method of projecting need with anticipated population growth?

We shouldn't think that the homeless and other populations being discussed would cause an increase in crime rates. Statistics in SHA developed communities show no crime rate increase. Where SHA's developed neighborhoods, statistics show that crime is actually less than in other areas of the city.

To address the question of Police presence and whether an increase in population would increase the number of officers in the area City staff at meeting were not sure if there is a formula but said they would find out. This is an issue that can be identified and addressed in the upcoming workshops.

12. Education Questions

Where will the influx of children attend school? If this project brings in transitional families with lots of children, have you considered where they go to school? What about head start programs at the site? Residents want to be sure that school capacity and quality is addressed to ensure sustainability to and maybe enhance the current standards.

There will likely be more children. We are not sure yet how many. This is another thing that we will have a community discussion about.

City staff have contacted the school district to let them know about the redevelopment.

13. Housing for the Homelessness Questions

What percentage has to be housing for homeless? Don't the federal programs have a high priority emphasis for homelessness?

Yes there is a priority given to homeless housing and services. Market-rate housing will help drive the Reuse Plan. The project has to have market-rate housing in order to make it work. The homes have to be something that is financially feasible, which means figuring out what best type(s) of housing works in Magnolia to pay for infrastructure. We have to balance market-rate housing with other housing types. The key to selling housing is that people have to want to live there. If you build not-so-good housing, and there is million-dollar housing next to it, it will not sell. Market-rate and Affordable housing is key. For example, developers/builders for High Point thought that they would be building low-income housing. However, people are paying \$600K, going up to \$700K for some homes in High Point. SHA is trying to build affordable housing, not trying to build low-income residences. We do not envision building exactly what you see in High Point. It is important to build homes that blend in to the neighborhood fabric. Hopefully you will not see X-Y-Z and then market rate housing next to it.

**Is it going to work for homeless housing? Ft. Lawton is in a remote location
Magnolia is not the typical neighborhood; it is not a pass through, but a destination.
Resident stated that he moved from Queen Anne Hill neighborhood because there was
homelessness there. Now you're [the proposed Fort Lawton project] trying to bring
homelessness to Magnolia.**

Yes, having homeless housing as part of the Fort Lawton redevelopment can work well .