

Fort Lawton Community Workshop Meeting Summary

May 31, 2008

8:30 Pre-Meeting

Background of Fort Lawton Reuse Planning

Linda Cannon of the City of Seattle Intergovernmental Relations, Mark Ellerbrook of the City of Seattle Office of Housing, and Scott McKean, Base Transition Coordinator, welcomed 5 attendees and provided them with the background and schedule to date on the Fort Lawton BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) process. The City of Seattle is designated as the Local Reuse Authority (LRA) for the site, and therefore is leading the reuse process.

No questions were asked of the City of Seattle on the process during the Q&A period. Attendees were encouraged to ask questions one-on-one of staff during the break.

9:00 Community Meeting

Introduction

Linda Cannon of the City of Seattle Intergovernmental Relations and Mark Ellerbrook of the City of Seattle Office of Housing welcomed attendees. Brian Scott of EDAW presented an overview of how the public's input can help shape the reuse of the Fort Lawton site. The following elements provide a summary of the feedback heard at the meeting by topic area.

Potential Park Acquisition – Comments and Questions

The City of Seattle Department of Parks will put in an application to acquire two parcels: 1) the north wooded slope and 2) the south wooded area adjacent to Texas Way on the east. Questions included:

- Why did the Parks Department decide on those two parcels? Didn't need the parking lots and buildings, just wanted the wooded areas as additions to Discovery Park.
- Doesn't Long Range Master Plan have policies that encourage the City to buy back as much of the army parcels as possible? Yes, within the park boundaries.
- If the Parks Department acquired the site, would it be managed as it does Discovery Park? Yes – it can be transferred through the National Park Service.
- Will the cemetery be retained by the federal government? Yes.
- How will the Parks Master Plan change? It will not change.
- Which areas is the park considering acquiring? The north and south wooded parcels.
- How does the Parks Department acquisition affect the site planning underway? It is currently included in the planning.
- Was the decision on which parcels to acquire an internal decision or one with a public process? Internal - Ken Bounds Park Director made the call with other City staff.
- Why did the Parks Department not consider taking on restoration of a site with buildings as it has done with other sites? The Federal government mandated that homeless housing was a value, so decisions were made based on getting housing on the site.

- Why don't you use Harvey Hall as a Seattle Parks Building and move the homeless housing to Denny Park downtown? For t Lawton is not a convenient location for Parks headquarters.

Process Comments and Questions

Brian Scott gave an overview of the BRAC process. Questions included:

- How does the community relations plan with the homeless housing component fit in with the final plan? The community relations plan will be included in the reuse plan that is submitted to the Army and HUD.
- Will the community relations process help decide how many units and the nature of the program for homeless housing? The community relations process is designed to address both concerns from both the neighborhood and the homeless housing providers to ensure that the homeless housing is successful.
- Where is the contingency plan and mitigation plan? We do not have a contingency or mitigation plan.
- Who is acquiring the property and financing this process? It has not been determined who will acquire the property as part of this process.
- How much does the Army want for the land? The City doesn't know yet.
- Has DPD been involved in determining the appropriate process for the land? Yes, DPD has been consulted.
- Can the City acquire the property and fulfill the homeless housing mandate by building the housing offsite? While the City can build the housing off-site, it must be done at its own cost rather than receiving land or building for free at the Fort Lawton site.
- How did the 66 unit threshold get decided between the last meeting and this one? The 66 threshold is a result of a statement of legislative intent from council action related to Capehart housing in the park.
- What is the mix of services for affordable/low-income housing? A variety of services will be provided to the formerly homeless families and individuals, including case management, drug and alcohol treatment, on-site meal program, vocational training, educational programs.
- What is going on with the moratorium? Per a letter from the Mayor on June 17, the City is not considering a moratorium.

Site Analysis Comments and Questions

- What is the bus route now and where is the stop located? The bus route has varied recently. Final routing needs to be coordinated with Metro.
- How many acres are buildable? 27 acres are developable
- Are the developable areas included the Park parcels of interest? No.
- Will there be impacts on properties down slope of the property? The site will be developed better than it is now. Current stormwater regulations are more stringent than what was in place when the site was previously developed.

Cultural

- How will the built memorials be handled on the site? Proper disposition of built memorials is being considered by the military. That will vary depending on context.
- Has anyone done an archeological survey on the area? No.

- How will Native American culture be addressed? Team is meeting with them shortly to look for ways to gain input from the Native Community.

Veterans Administration Building

- When will the additional VA trips occur? Weekend or during the week? That is unknown at this point given information released by the VA.

Program Elements

Building Program

Unit Types and Counts

- Will there be rental or home ownership? Other than the housing for formerly homeless, the building program does not currently anticipate rental housing.
- Will the market rate for the single family homes be diminished by low-income and homeless housing? The site program needs to be defined to understand this.
- Has the housing consultant provided a report that will be made publicly available? A slide show was provided to the City and will be made available.
- Can the community have input on the number of low income housing? The 66 threshold is a set low end number and needed to make the rest of the site work.
- Isn't the market rate housing data provided low for view properties? This is the analysis by a Seattle based housing economist.
- What is the market impact on this mix of housing types? The site program needs to be defined to understand this.
- What is the target mix of housing? This will be further defined at future meetings.
- Will you provide a study that indicates that the mix of market and affordable/low-income housing will be appropriate and alleviate potential social impacts for the existing, small neighborhood? Yes.
- Which homes will pay taxes? All homes but the housing for formerly homeless will pay taxes.
- Will you provide an estimate of population on site? While it is difficult to know the total number of people on site for certain, the total number of units will be further refined at future meetings.
- Could Harvey Hall have additional stories? Probably not.
- What does "elder" mean? 55 or over.
- Will there be sufficient funding to build new facilities for elder housing? Can that funding be used for integrated facilities? Yes, there will be sufficient funding to build the housing.
- Will all services for elder housing be in the building or on the site? What off site services will there be? There will not be an additional ancillary building providing only services.

Traffic Counts

- What is the traffic capacity of the site with housing? Some traffic data was provided at the meeting and additional information will be provided at the following meetings
- Was the type of unit considered in the total traffic trips calculated? Yes, and it will be for future calculations.

Existing Buildings

- Could Harvey hall have additional stories? Probably not.
- Will the auditorium be retaining in Harvey Hall? It could.

- What is the incentive to reuse versus demolish? Cost, product, location, appropriate use, and sustainability.
- Will Harvey Hall be demolished if it isn't used for elder housing? Yes.

Zoning

- Could Harvey hall have additional stories? Probably not.
- Does the density bonus provided by a PRD increase single family homes or total unit? Total units.

Location of AHA Elder Housing Comments

- Integration of homeless housing is important – don't set it aside as a “do not go to” zone.
- Reusing Harvey Hall across from existing single family housing may not be a good idea.
- Sharing facilities with children and the mentally ill may not be a good idea.

Open Space Options

Questions

- Is the City thinking about cutting down tree stands at the north end of site and south? No.
- Why is the park acreage set aside limited? Parks is only interested in acquiring portions of the site that will add habitat or forested areas to Discovery Park.
- How will the parks be managed? Open space on site will be managed by an homeownership association. Land that is deeded to the parks department will be managed by Seattle Parks.

Comments

- Magnolia has no pea patch and could use a larger community garden.

Site Access Options

Questions

- Will there need to be a stoplight at the site entrance at Government Way? The transportation consultant will review this.
- Do any options involve taking down existing trees? No.
- Will the options meet fire safety standard? Yes.
- Have you reviewed the Gibson report that identifies safety issues and noise impacts of Texas Street? Uncertain.

Comments

- Plan C will greatly improve safety for existing residential area and children, allow for improvements to wildlife corridor, and provide opportunity to keep bus off of 36th Ave.
- Consider past traffic study that encouraged a traffic circle at Government Way.
- Plan A looks like it accommodates emergency vehicles best, especially as needed for homeless housing.
- The S curve along Texas Way (to the west) is dangerous (glare and slippery).
- 4 votes for A, 4 votes for B, 34 for C

Internal Circulation Options

Questions

- Will there need to be a stoplight at the site entrance at Government Way? See above.
- Have you considered all of the existing traffic that will want to drive on 36th Avenue going south? Site circulation will be further considered at the next meetings.

Comments

- Focus should be less on auto dependent and more on pedestrian. Greenway feel would be great.
- Social integration can be integrated with pedestrian connections.
- Option A seems overwhelming
- Voting A = 6, B = 30, C = 1, D = 3

36th Avenue Character

Questions

- Will there need to be a stoplight at the site entrance at Government Way? See response above.
- Will street improvements take from the existing properties or be done solely within the existing ROW? In the existing ROW.

Comments

- Capturing stormwater runoff within the street ROW would be a good thing.
- Existing property owners do not want sidewalks.
- Sidewalks on both sides of the street are great for kids.
- Traffic calming is very important. Speed of access is unimportant.
- Lots of comments on liking the "green streets" concept.
- Tranquil streets are good.
- Sidewalks take away from existing properties.
- Would like to see more bike paths.
- Vote for A = 7, B = 18, C = 2

Next Steps

Attendees' feedback will be used to develop three site plan alternatives. The three alternatives will be presented at the next workshop on June 21.