



MEMORANDUM

TO: Design Commission

FROM: Pamela Kliment, Neighborhood Matching Fund Planner

DATE: November 16, 2006

SUBJECT: Ballard Pocket Park

Project Description and Background

Ballard Pocket Park consists of two land parcels; one of which was purchased with Pro Parks Levy Opportunity funds in 2003. Parks is negotiating purchase of the second parcel; this parcel has a house that has sat empty for over ten years. The acquisition of this property filled a need identified during the Neighborhood Planning process for the Ballard Hub Urban Village. The area is zoned multi-family (LDT) and there is an eclectic mix of residential types including historic single family residences, and multi-family structures through the 20th century. The shape of the site is unusual because the two parcels are end to end instead of next to each other. Therefore, the site has two street corners.

The neighborhood is changing with higher property values and new condominium projects replacing single family and older rental units. Younger residents and children are a stronger presence. One block west of the high volume arterial 15th Ave NW and very near Salmon Bay Middle School and Ballard High School the site has the potential to be accessible to a very large and diverse population. From the site it is an easy walk into Central Ballard and to bus transit.

The Friends of Ballard Corners Park (the community's working name for the park) received a Small and Simple award from the Department of Neighborhoods in November 2005 to hire a landscape architect to work with the neighborhood to create a concept plan for development. John Barker Landscape Architects worked with the "Friends" to produce a schematic plan that fulfills the neighbor's vision for the park; to create a place for neighbors to gather in a beautiful garden like place. The schematic plan includes open lawn, a small play area, small seating area, gateway element that is reminiscent of the corner store that once existed at the site and a rain garden through the planting strip.

Public Involvement Process

For each NMF project, Parks pays for a sign at the site and a large mailing in the neighborhood. This is required as part of our public involvement policy. There are also three public design workshops. Typically, the community does a lot more outreach. www.ballardcornerspark.org is informative and witty. The Ballard Herald Tribune has covered this project regularly and the Groundswell Northwest newsletter informs readers about the latest news. There have been many events at the site such as a fence tear down party, an Easter egg, a rummage sale and others. The group has fabricated buttons that are being distributed in the neighborhood announcing the project.

Budget and Funding

A schematic plan has been completed with the first NMF award (\$15,000). The Friends of Ballard Corners Park have a second NMF award to pay for design development (\$15,000). Funding for construction will be from the Pro parks Levy Opportunity Fund (\$150,000), community funding and most likely a Large Project Fund Neighborhood Matching Fund award (\$100,000). Currently, the group is raising funds for the project in unusual ways such as an arrangement with Amazon and Fremont Books (!) to receive 4% from each item ordered through the Ballard Corners website. The "Friends" have also reached out to King County, state congressional members and Governor Gregoire.

Schedule

A schematic plan has been completed with the first NMF award. The Friends of Ballard Corners Park have a second NMF award to pay for design development. After that, a Pro Parks project manager will work with the group and the consultant to complete the project. Funding for construction will be from the Pro Parks Levy Opportunity Fund, community fundraising and potentially a 2007 Large Project Fund NMF award. The project should be complete by December 2007

Next Steps

Start design development, spread the word and raise funds!

Additional Information

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Attachments

1. Crown Hill/Ballard Neighborhood Plan area
2. Schematic Design-plan view
3. Schematic design sketch