



## CAPITOL HILL PARK DEVELOPMENT

### Public Meeting #2

Date: March 26, 2008

7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

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Attendees: Lynn Sullivan, Parks Project Manager  
Royal Alley-Barnes, North Region Parks Resources Manager  
Deb Gunther, Principal, Mithun  
Craig Skipton, Mithun  
Karen O'Connor, Parks Public Information Officer  
Approximately 45 community members

### Introduction:

Lynn Sullivan presented the budget and Draft project schedule:

- Budget Breakdown:
  - Planning: \$8,050
  - Design: \$75,186
  - Associated Construction Costs: \$89,700
  - Construction Contract: \$282,866
  - Total Budget: \$455,802
- Draft Project Schedule:
  - Design is scheduled to continue through 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2008
  - **A third, and last, public meeting is currently scheduled for May/June 2008**
  - Preparation of construction documents will likely occur 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters 2008
  - Project is scheduled to be advertised for bid 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2009.
  - Construction will likely start 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2009 with completion in the third quarter

### Site Description:

Bounded on the south by E. Howell Street, and the east by 16<sup>th</sup> Ave E., the existing site is 120' x 144' (.40 acre) and slopes approximately 3% from northeast to southwest.

### Presentation:

Deb Guenther outlined the Design Principals she and her colleague, Craig Skipton, used in developing their design concepts:

- + safe and secure
- + simple and elegant
- + adaptable to future additions and changes
- + flexible for use by big groups (immediate community) as well as individuals.
- + expressive of neighborhood and Seattle character
- + civic legacy
- + welcoming

Deb and Craig presented three design concepts. These concepts were then placed at three separate stations and participants rotated, in assigned groups, between stations. Lynn, Deb, and Craig each manned a station and recorded comments.

### **Concept #1: The Lawn**

The essence of this concept is to create a canvas for community use. The main component of the site is a large, level, turf area in the middle of the site that is bordered by community gardens to the north

and a paved plaza with trees and rain-garden planter on the south. The turf area is also bounded in areas by large steps that provide informal seating as well as easy access through the site at any location.

Observations:

- Good group gathering area (x2)
- Like the amount of open space – great open space (x2)
- Not quite there yet: suggest combining the Lawn and Grove concepts
- Concerned about locating a shed along the church property line
- A community garden is a good way to build community
- Keep wood elements where shown on the concepts, its important to have the textural difference
- Elders need different seating as they have different physical requirements
- Its all lawn -- too much of one thing
- Bench lockers are good alternative to a shed
- Not enough seating
- Frightened of what a shed would look like; needs to match quality of the overall design
- Too homogenous; too much of one thing
- Grass = impervious surface, i.e. drainage problems

Suggestions:

- Install raised planting beds on both the south and north sides and put real benches up against them.
- Use alley access for garden service area
- Install more seating along Howell Street
- Move gardens to the south
- Move the lawn north to the church property line
- Add trees along alley for screening
- Add seating in shade
- Extend lawn to the alley property line
- Install raised planting beds and paths
- Create slopes to lie on
- Disperse plantings beds on the site
- Install more trees for seating in shade
- No benches – use real chairs
- Install places for portable grills
- No grills
- Desire permanent grills (x3)

**Concept #2: The Grove**

This concept seeks to create an identity by creating a grid of trees that create a canopy to walk and sit under on using either chairs or porch-like swings. Sunnier spots, between the rows of trees, have random patches of turf to sit and picnic on. The site also provides opportunities to disperse the community garden aspect throughout the site in smaller patches. A series of steps from Howell Street up into the site allows the grove to be more level and also provides seating along the street under the existing street tree canopy.

Observations:

- Grove of trees is distinctive and unique for city park
- Keep plum and cherry trees along 16th Avenue E.
- Like having the planting beds interspersed throughout park
- An increased use of native plants equals a decrease in water use

- Nice mix of park and flowering garden
- Planters block the free flow of foot traffic
- Sheds are ugly and dangerous; use benches for storage
- Need more open space
- Stairs to the southwest are too high; they break up the flow and hinder entry to the park
- Concerned that stairs are barriers to line-of-sight (clarification from design team: stairs would be 36" high)
- Design restricts large public gatherings
- Too much paving; prefer smaller walkways connecting larger paved "islands"
- Needs to be less grid like; work with the existing topography
- Don't like the lack of open space
- Too many places for people to hide (x2)
- Too many trees. We need sun (x2)
- Seating options need to address all physical abilities

Suggestions:

- Do we really want chairs? Suggest benches like at Cal Anderson Park
- Design benches with storage space instead of using a shed

**Concept #3: The Hills of Seattle**

This site is nearly at the top of Capitol Hill and this concept works to highlight that uniqueness of place. Planted mounds of either community gardens or turf are situated around the site and maintain various elevations that speak to the geology and topography of the region. Between the mounds is either crushed gravel or other paving for walking. At the south edge of the site are several rain gardens for collecting site drainage. This concept was rejected for consideration the Parks Department. It was presented to the community to show Mithun's design evolution.

Observations:

- Cool, but doesn't fit this space. Its very avant-garde
- Like the idea of the 7 ecosystems
- Like that it educates: good teaching opportunity
- Like the habitat plantings
- Kudos for the cutting edge design
- Likes the variety – can we get that in the other two designs?
- Its pretty, but it needs a bigger site
- Like that it has public art
- An absolutely fascinating concept
- Like the different plant habitats
- Design does not seem to invite play
- No room for unstructured play
- Looking for something that is overwhelmingly green
- Cuts down on large group space
- Too segmented, makes for hiding places
- Too much crushed stone
- Final design needs to allow opportunity for community art
- Need a central space to garden
- Accommodate cross traffic thorough the site
- Would like less garden area and more open space

**Comments offered during general question and answer period near end of the meeting:**

- Interested in a hybrid park: gardens as well as other space
- Like the Commons theme but there is not sufficient garden space

- Would like to see garden space done in a different way
- Diagonal lines (desire lines) in the park are important
- A gathering space is important
- Would like to see the gardens spread out – not just in one area
- Interested in public art (sculpture?) as an identifying piece for the park
- Area of sun is important
- Who takes care of community garden? How do you insure sustainability?
- What are the public guidelines for community garden
- Like the freeform open area – a place to kick a ball and throw a Frisbee
- Possibly spruce up alley to make the park bigger – a green road way – grass between pavers
- Need a group to spearhead the art and to raise money for the art
- Would like a central cohesive idea
- Tie in the church
- Use church as part of the park