



CAPITOL HILL PARK DEVELOPMENT

Public Meeting #3

Date: May 28, 2008

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Attendees: Lynn Sullivan, Project Manager, Seattle Parks
Deb Guenther, Principal, Mithun
Craig Skipton, Project Manager, Mithun
Royal Alley-Barnes, Parks Resource Manager, Seattle Parks
Tamara Barnett, Parks Staff

Workshop Format

- The presentation boards were available for informal viewing prior to the start of the meeting.
- Lynn Sullivan, Parks project manager, opened the meeting and presented a general summary of activities and information to date.
- Mithun (Deb Guenther + Craig Skipton) made their presentation including:
 - a summary of community comments from meeting #2
 - the list of design principles
 - + 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
 - CPTED principles [CPTED - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design](#)
 - the preferred plan
 - the plan per current budget
 - a cost estimate discussion.
- The attendees broke into two workstation discussion groups. In one group, participants were asked to prioritize elements that were not currently covered by the existing budget. The other group discussed design issues.
- Comments from each of the groups were summarized by Deb and Craig.
- Community discussion
- Draft timeline:
 - Planning through second quarter in 2008.
 - Community fundraising to occur between third quarter 2008 and fourth quarter 2009.

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- Construction to occur in fourth quarter 2009 & first quarter in 2010 with completion in first quarter in 2010.

Design Presentation

- The drop-off zone (for compost and wood chips) has been eliminated from the garden in response to the adjacent property owner's concerns. Once the garden is operational, the DON Patch Program and gardeners will manage the delivery of these items.
- Storage alternatives are shown in the plan as tool benches so as to reduce visual impacts and improve security concerns raised by the community and adjacent property owner. The community, which will be funding the garden, has agreed to pursue the installation of tool benches.
- Mithun reviewed safety and security issues concerning the garden space including planting heights, evergreen areas, setbacks, edge materials, and major path locations. These issues will need to be addressed by the community, DON, and Parks during the garden design phase.
- Mithun requested feedback concerning the removal or retention of the cherry trees along the north property line.
- The irrigation system and the water meter are included in the base design.
- Lighting is included in the base design.
- The terms "community garden," "collective garden," and "p-patch," were clarified:
The DON P-Patch Program defines the patches of land they manage as community gardens. They call their program the P-Patch Community Gardening Program. A community garden and a P-Patch are one and the same. P-Patch is simply the historic name assigned to the community gardening program in Seattle. The program is part of a broad national community gardening movement. A great website to take a look at is the American Community Gardening Association <http://www.communitygarden.org/>

At most P-patch community gardens, there are plots assigned to individual gardeners and there are communal areas maintained by all the gardeners and participating neighbors. These communal areas include many of the elements that make P-Patch community gardens inviting to the neighborhood--perimeter ornamental plantings, open sitting areas, signs, inviting walkways, and perennial beds as well as necessary items like tool sheds, composting areas and irrigation systems.

While most of Seattle's P-Patch community gardens use the model described above, the P-Patch program is exploring a different, more open design and management structure -- the "collective model." This model makes the whole garden "collective" and all the space within the garden is designed, built, and gardened collectively or together as a group. In some densely populated areas, where gardening demand far outstrips available space, it is a good way to maximize community involvement and gardening. Rich MacDonald, P-Patch Program Coordinator

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Community Comments (grouped into discussion threads)

Collective garden:

- Joel Lavin, the church owner, presented an alternative design with the garden located along the alley. There were two other attendees that voiced their support for this plan. Many other community members stated they were concerned this option would block pedestrian circulation and create hiding places in the alley.
- A community member wondered if raised beds, as proposed by Joel Lavin, would create an additional liability for the City.
- A few people voiced concerned that the pedestrian circulation across the park, between the alley and 16th Street, would be blocked by locating the garden along the alley.
- Another comment was that the church is already a barrier to the circulation into the park and locating the garden along the alley would add another barrier.
- Opposition was expressed toward a garden that was not City maintained. Lynn clarified that if the garden group disbanded, the garden would likely become lawn area.
- Lynn pointed out that gardens typically activate a space with regular users and make the space safer.
- Based on the shadow analysis done by Mithun, the most desirable sun access for a garden is in the north, central portion of the park where they have it located in their design.

Cost:

- The community reviewed two plans – one, a preferred plan and the other, a plan that illustrates what the current budget can afford.
- The budget does not include monies for garden improvements. Garden advocates will work with the P-Patch program and raise money through the Neighborhood Matching Grant.
- Since the garden does not currently have funding, some residents wondered if it is worth pursuing. Lynn pointed out there is an active group of garden supporters with a strong desire to develop and manage the garden.
- Community members were encouraged to fundraise. An email list was discussed and contact information exchanged.
- People were asked to discuss and prioritize the items that are not covered by the park budget. Tallies identified the following priority:
 - Benches under trees
 - Trellis (over picnic tables)
 - Barbecues and picnic tables
 - Gathering area/art installation
 - Wood paving (at south end of park)
 - Green power

Trees:

- Concern was expressed about adding Sweetgums due to their susceptibility to aphid infestations. Sweetgums are the existing street trees on Howell Street and Mithun is proposing adding another line of them at the south end of the park.
Note: there was a post-meeting discussion about alternative cultivars of sweetgums that are not as susceptible to aphids.

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- An observation was made that the existing cherry trees help with the transition between the park and the church.
- A meeting participant thought that the cherry trees were intimidating at night from a safety standpoint.
- Another meeting participant suggested that the cost to remove the cherry trees may not be worth it, given the budget limitations.

General Park Design Comments:

- A suggestion was offered to have the benches built by local artists with their name on a plaque on either the bench or the ground. This is an idea for the community to pursue.
- Concern was expressed about ensuring that Parks did not limit the turning radius associated with the private driveway on the west side of the alley.

Action Items

1. Mithun will evaluate the potential of removing the western-most cherry tree to provide more sun in the garden space.
2. Most of the community participants who voiced their opinions preferred having the garden space located along the north property line.
3. Based on community feedback from the first and second meetings, a collective garden (common garden space, not individual plots) will be created in this park. It will be managed by the the DON P-patch program and the community. A Memorandum of Agreement will detail expectations between Parks, DON, and the community.
4. Based on ProView comments and community feedback, Mithun will move forward with the design that was presented at the Capitol Hill Park meeting on May 28, 2008.
5. Lynn will be in touch with the community regarding fundraising and garden design.