

MEETING NOTES

DATE 02.22.2024
PROJECT PP&R #30008449
23005.00 North Park Blocks Extension
SUBJECT PAC 2 Meeting via Zoom 02.22.2024
FROM PLACE
Link to Recording of meeting:
Link to Miro Board: <https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVN6xLwGg=/>

Portland Parks & Recreation

- Gary Datka
- Maija Spencer
- Yanet Asghedom

- PAC Members
 - Amy Adams
 - Andrew Plambeck
 - Angie Garner-Sinjeokov
 - Bill Truncali
 - Catherine Garvin
 - Chris Freeman
 - Christine Chin Ryan
 - Christopher Espersen
 - Erik Swanson
 - Keith Jones
 - Laquida Landford
 - Malaika Vereen
 - Paul Park
 - Scott Strickland
 - Shei'Meka (BeUtee) As-Salaam

PLACE

- Jocelyn Bates
- Mauricio Villarreal
- Zeljka Carol Kekez
- Miguel Camacho-Serna
- Ru Wu
- Sara Gong

HOOD Design Studio

- Alma du Solier
- Kelley Johnson

ZGF Architects

- Nolan Lienhart
- Allison Rouse

AGENDA

Introductions – Maija, All

Recap -Alma gave brief summary.

Key themes - Mauricio

We have looked at all the work that has been done on the USPS site and six key themes that came out of that work that are important to assess as we focus on the open space.

Nolan added that this project is meant to serve the community and as well as the city, acting as a gateway to downtown and to the train station which should be reflected in all of the key themes.

Your Values – Alma

What are your aspirations and values relative to each of the six key themes?

Connected

- Amy Adams – connect to each other, public spaces empty, want to feel connected to each other, make it a destination for people to come together, it is desperately needed.
- Keith Jones – From the Green Loop, should have wayfinding, feel at ease to move around the neighborhood, make easy to get in and out, and to connect with local businesses.
- Catherine Garvin – Connected feeling at home, being connected to the city feels good, strongly support idea of “connected”.

- “Include”: nature, First Thursday events, Iconic public sculpture, lunch/social spots for PNCA, off the Green Loop, meander and wander through neighborhood for future business opportunities, access to transit (streetcar to the west/MAX to the east).

- “Do NOT Include”: physical barriers, a different design from the existing NPB.

Equitable

- Catherine Garvin – knowing you can hop from park to park is good, proximity to Lan Su Garden and Jamison Square.
- Keith Jones – have activity and vibrancy to bring safety, fences and gates not a good trend.
- Bill – Jamison Park more of a square than a park, space where a lot of events happen, lots of activity and commerce, destination for different activities. Tanner Springs more of reflection park, not for a lot of activities.
- Andrew – like for South Park Blocks, lots of space for variety, can have spaces reserved for reflection and others for activity.
- Catherine – want to know what community’s values are too, alarm goes off if space wants to be too many things, especially if becomes too noisy, would not want too many events in the evening.
- Andrew – precedent of the South Park Blocks...they tie all together and work as part of a wholistic system.
- Keith - think of the entire NPB as a linear park. Beauty of the parks provide opportunities to program in the entire park.
- Keith - Activity creates safety, not fences, it makes it worse!
- Bill Truncali – Jamison Square is active, Tanner Springs is contemplative.

- Catherine Garvin –These spaces create memoires and make you want to come back again,
- Other comments: Define the values of the community, how do we know the values of other members in the community. Don't make it too many things, Be mindful of noise, over-active spaces.
- "Include": Don' lose sight of the fact that public safety should not take a backseat to any agenda, avoid hostile architecture, in the end it creates an uninhabitable space for all, plans and funds for future maintenance, sensory inclusive, diversity and equity initiatives in event planning, flexible for many programmed uses, smart design will hopefully include areas that are clearly designated for quiet reflection and other areas, like ball courts, etc for group and shared activities.
- "Do NOT Include": Loud events, especially in the evening, not locking things away.

Prosperous

- Alma – Park is not commercial space, but should support commercial around it.
- Bill – Park will play vital role in rebuilding commercial investment, revitalize neighborhood businesses, encourage investment and will bring visitors into this neighborhood and downtown. This is a critical objective. At Jamison, they are using the park to galvanize the neighborhood. Pearl has 115 vacant spaces. NPB may have a different strategy.
- Keith – Are they park properties or privately owned? PPR does own Site 1. PPR has interdepartmental agreement re Site 2, Park will turn over to PPR when development occurs.
- Keith - infrastructure for food carts or Markets? Don't overload with food trucks, they are everywhere. Opens a can of worms.
- Gary – site 1 is park property, site 2 not yet owned, will be turned over to parks, may be difficult to have food trucks, but can set up infrastructure for the future.
- Catherine – So many stores in the Pearl is empty that can be used for training, events, don't want to fill park with commerce. Please rephrase the 'aspiration'.
- Catherine – Prosperous idea is a "no". I support a clear single view, don't try to do too much. Be a beautiful park, not a commercial center. There are so many places in the world for commerce and so very few natural areas in close proximity.
- Andrew – small-scale commercial activity can activate the park, ice cream vendor, winter market, popup, create draw for people to come in, can be thoughtful, not something Portland does well. Add more thought as to how this could be a benefit to the activation and community.
- Paul – can move activity to Greyhound station, split between whether or not should have commercial activity, understand there will be noise, want advanced notice for residents.
- Bill – so many open commercial spaces near Jamison Square, trying to use park to galvanize neighborhood and bring people in, may not be exactly what we want on NPB, but anything that brings people in is a good thing, trouble with vibrancy because there are 115 vacant commercial spaces, many businesses have closed.

- “Include”: Revitalize neighborhood businesses, encourage investment, small scale commercial activity to activate the space, supports opportunities for farmer’s and arts markets, power and water hook-ups, non-commercial activities ie games, fun path design, public spaces should not be exclusively monetizable, where has this been done well? Highline? Not just flexible open spaces – include activities that bring people here, advance notice for residents and care for type of events, develop the greyhound station into a Singaporean style food hall, allow police and EMS to operate from there to protect the park and the areas, and that will draw in visitors; lighting, infrastructure for events like pavilions, walls, or screens to project on, seating, include a loading zone for PNCA building or for other events.
- “Do NOT Include”: No commerce in the park.

Resilient

- Paul – public refuge / disaster management is a big issue to try to confront here
- Nolan – Central City Master Plan noted that this open space could be a good place to gather, plan it to support that function when there is nowhere else. Old Town has a lot of unreinforced buildings and little open space.
- Maija – many parks operate as beacon sites.
- “Include”: Tree maintenance, probably need a dog free area or add far more resilient soil and grass so it doesn’t get trampled and muddy, ability for built parts of it to be easily changed in the future.
- “Do NOT Include”: This land is probably not appropriate for use for emergency farming, camping or medical staging without significant planning.

Vibrant

- Alma - How can a space be many things to many people? Multiple ways to engage with the park. Allow one person to be peaceful, and another to jump around and make noise with their kids.
- Catherine – We all need space, air water, each other, all things that are essential, are park activities what define us? Vs what is core value of creating memories based on our own experience?
- Keith – activities might be too broad a word. difference between activities that bring people in and things people do, programming vs activity.
- Angie – designing a park to lowest common denominator of activity does not allow for both, don’t be too broad, risk of it being for nobody.
- “Include”: Public Art, include lunch and hangout infrastructure for PNCA students (tables and benches), There is a great playground that is unused because of demographics and no family-friendly housing on the park, Everyone feels included, include things to help everyone create their own memories and happiness, physical sound barrier from traffic on Glisan.

- “Do NOT” Include: carved out individual spaces or homogenous spaces.

Accountable

- Alma – has to do with the longevity of park. We want to design the park to be maintainable, when it is a well-loved site, then it will continue be vibrant and resilient.
- Paul - Define the word “stakeholder”.
- Angie - Everyone is a stakeholder.

OPEN HOUSE Preview

4 Stations/activities/4 different ways to give input that will help us start the design.

- Your Values
- Your site – opportunities and constraints
- Your stories – people tell us what they care for about the site, and the neighborhood. We want to understand what is important.
- Your NPB

Comments / Next Steps

- Gary will look into programing ideas ie food carts etc. and how that will work.
- Gary - We won't be renovating the existing NPB as part of this project, but we will have conversations about them and want to learn from them.
- Catherine: Poetry Beach is a great precedent for how to tell the stories, Lan Su has a Tea House, something small like that would be nice. Park can become a destination if linked to Portland Winter Light festival.
- Angie – what will public art be?
- Gary - Lee Kelly sculpture will stay on site. We will work with RACC. This group will have input on what types of art are appropriate for this site.
- Maija – we will send notes/summary of what we heard tonight.
- We will work towards an in-person meeting for PAC3 at PLACE or perhaps at PNCA.
- PAC 3 - (beginning of June) – 3 Alternative Concepts
- Mid-June CE2