



**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 18, 2022**

PRESENT:

Andrea Smith, President
Aaron Pointer, Clerk
Erik Hanberg
Tim Reid
Rosie Ayala

IN THE CHAIR: Andrea Smith

PLACE: Remote Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Smith at 5:30pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

November 28, 2021, COW Minutes

Commissioner Reid moved adoption of the minutes as presented; seconded by Commissioner Pointer and passed on a vote of 5-0.

PORTLAND AVENUE PARK UPDATE

Debbie Terwilleger opened the presentation by commenting that there have been some delays and starts and stops around the planning for Portland Avenue Park in past years. Ms. Terwilleger comment that meeting agenda items tonight include planning context, master plan objectives & process, status of interim projects/site features, community outreach & engagement, and next steps.

Staff then reviewed a slide that summarized the park planning context over the past five years. It was noted that in 2017 there were a number of things that occurred including the following: ECC Community Center transition, Park Board commitment to retain property, and community conversations over high priority center services and park priorities. The Board was then reminded that between 2018 and 2020 the following occurred: a lease was negotiated with KWA in October of 2018, the wading pool was shut down due to safety issues, KWA ended their lease & moved out in Jan. 2020, and then COVID shut down MPT facilities & master planning process. Ms. Terwilleger followed by explaining things that happened in 2021

including: interim use of the center by Eloise's Cooking Pot, MPT looking at interim site activation options , and then in May arson fire closed the building.

Ms. Terwilliger then commented that District wide park planning for the entire system will pick up in 2022 and this will be tandem with resuming the master planning for Portland Avenue Park for the whole site based on existing community feedback.

Debbie Terwilliger then showed a slide outlining the project timeline including master planning components like engagement, survey work and design planning. The timeline also outlined timing for demolition of the wading pool and fire remediation. She noted the goal is to have this work completed by the end of 2022.

The Board was then informed of the masterplan objectives. Staff commented that the goals for the design of the site include: updating the park for multiple users with high quality facilities, safety, park/building connection, and consideration of current and future uses through equity lens. Other factors that will influence the planning include: utilizing extensive feedback from community, neighborhood connectivity and active transportation links, and near-term building activation. Staff commented that they are planning a robust outreach process with the community through the District's engagement team. The District will also be advertising for an RFQ for A& E service in late January. The scope of work for that A&E firm will include assisting with public outreach, park development, program and design alternatives and the final masterplan. Staff further commented that wetland delimitation and survey work is being done now in order to inform the master plan process.

At the request of Commissioner Ayala there was brief discussion on how staff is defining "community" for this project. Ms. Terwilliger stated that although this site is considered a community park and it serves a broader area than a neighborhood park. She continued by noting that staff is broadening the definition in this case to include not only those living in the neighborhood but park users that may travel to the site to use the fields such as the Tacoma Rugby Club and those participants that have used past programs at the site.

Debbie Terwilliger commented staff is moving forward with the demolition of the wading pool but at the request of the community the restroom building will remain for now. She continued by stating that staff's intent is to replace the wading pool with a water feature such as sprayground with confirmation through the master planning process. The restrooms, fields/courts, playground and parking will be evaluated during the master planning as well. As far as the building goes, staff commented that a structural assessment is being done related to the fire damage. The intent is to repair the damage. Ms. Terwilliger stated that staff is also working on activating the building in the near term and is looking at tenant options. Staff also wants to continue looking at long-term building use for community benefit. Marty Stump showed photos of the fire damage to the building and explained things that will need to be replaced including ceiling and roof framing. Staff noted the building is not usable for the public at this time.

Debbie Terwilliger then addressed outreach with the community on the work to take place at Portland Avenue site. She commented outreach will occur with Renters, Safe Streets, local organizations and schools within a 10-minute walk; East Tacoma Collaborative; Tacoma Rugby;

neighborhood coalitions; faith communities; Equity Action Collaborative, MPT Advisory Councils, Public Arts Advisory Committee and MPT staff. It was then explained that Metro Parks is also seeking to build a government-to-government relationship with the Puyallup Tribe, based upon a history of agreements between the United States and Native American Tribes. The hope is to explore the Tribe's interest at Portland Avenue and beyond.

Staff continued by stating that the project will also establish a multi-faceted outreach and engagement strategy to include a governance and agency leadership committee and a community advisory council.

Commissioner Pointer expressed his interest in having a sprayground in the park. He also asked about the future use of the building. Staff noted they are looking for partner that can occupy and program the building for the public and will reconfirm this through the engagement process with the community.

Commissioner Reid noted his support for a future sprayground at the site. He noted that he might vision a senior center as a possibility for the building.

Commissioner Ayala underscored the need for designing around a tree canopy, and other environmental aspects. Staff also addressed the Commissioner's question noting that accessibility is critical in the design as well.

Commissioner Hanberg asked about the clarification and draw of visitors to the Park. Staff noted that this a community parking noting the length of stay is normally longer and the types of amenities attract both regional as well as local neighborhood visitors. He encouraged notification of planning out to a wide group of users. He also noted his support for a sprayground at the site. Commissioner Hanberg stated that this process should help the District look for park-like activities to occur in future use of the building. Commissioner Smith also encouraged a wide range outreach to include those users around the region.

Debbie Terwilleger commented that next steps include:

- Confirm Overall Project Work Plan & Objectives
- Proceed with modified wading pool demolition project
- Complete building repairs
- Establish project steering committees and begin outreach and engagement
- Further relationship building with Puyallup Tribe of Indians
- Procure A/E services of planning consultant through competitive RFP process and begin planning process
- Explore opportunities for near-term building activation
- Seek Future CIP and Grant Funding Opportunities

OTHER

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, Commissioner Hanberg adjourned the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

APPROVED:

President

Clerk

Submitted by:
Jennifer Bowman, Secretary