

# Willamette Falls

## ◦ LEGACY PROJECT ◦

### PARTNERS GROUP MEETING MINUTES

September 19, 2016

*Clackamas County Development Services Building  
150 Beaver Creek Road, Oregon City, OR*

10:00 AM-12:00 PM

#### Partner Attendees

**Oregon City:** Mayor Dan Holladay, Commissioner Renate Mengelberg, City Manager Tony Konkol  
**Metro:** Council President Tom Hughes, Councilor Carlotta Collette, COO Martha Bennett  
**County:** Commissioner Tootie Smith, Commissioner Martha Schrader, County Administrator Don Krupp  
**State:** Regional Solutions Metro Region Coordinator Bobby Lee, State Parks Deputy Director M.G. Devereux

**Missing:** Senator Alan Olsen, Representative Brent Barton

**Special Guests:** Michelle Delk/Snøhetta, Matt McMahon/Snøhetta, Carol Mayer-Reed/Mayer/Reed

**The meeting was called to order by Tom Hughes at 10:00 AM.**

Kathleen Brennan-Hunter, Metro Parks and Nature Director, welcomed everyone and began introductions around the room. Proposition of a rotating Chair for Partners meetings adopted. Tom Hughes was chosen as first chair, starting with today's meeting.

#### **Project Updates**

- Tony Konkol shared that the Vision and Master Plan for Willamette Falls Legacy Project received an award from Waterfront Center, which will be awarded in Washington, D.C. this fall.
- New Willamette Falls Project Manager, Brian Moore, from Los Angeles starts in position on October 17. He has experience as a project manager in residential and commercial development, and on economic development projects in Washington state.
- The Technical Advisory Committee approved an interim agreement with Rediscover the Falls, the non-profit friends group, last week.
- The findings from the Oregon Consensus riverwalk ownership assessment will be presented to the Partners next meeting.

#### **Development Strategy Update**

- Christina Robertson-Gardiner provided some brief context for the development strategy work, highlighting the CPDG grant with Falls Legacy and how this work will help the project better understand Falls Legacy's short and long term development goals:

- Following the riverwalk easement with Falls Legacy, goal has been to advance riverwalk project as catalyst for site development.
- Pursued a joint public-private approach, and Oregon City and Clackamas County won a regional community planning and development grant to match resources from Falls Legacy, LLC.
- Christina articulated accomplishments to date, including a look at opportunities and constraints for development through an urban design and economic development lens. She mentioned an update to the City's parking plan, which will help in development of the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan and the site's parking plan.
  - Oregon City urban renewal funds allowed for a new parking and usage study in downtown Oregon City provided updated data showing that more people are utilizing parking downtown after 5:00 pm.
  - Falls Legacy, LLC will present a payment of \$200,000 in October as a milestone payment towards infrastructure, parking, and related costs.
  - TDM and infrastructure plans will be moving forward this fall.

### **Riverwalk Update**

Representative of the design team, Michelle Delk of Snøhetta, presented pre-conceptual designs and ideology of the riverwalk project.

Presentation highlights are below:

- Public release of alternative designs to be in November 2016.
- Teams to determine direction to these designs in the interim this fall.
- Phase I design and construction to follow after selection of preferred design in February 2017.
- Robust public engagement informs the designs; including March open house, First City Celebration, and stakeholder meetings
- 4 Core Values guided design development: Public access, healthy habitat, historic and cultural interpretation, and economic development.
- Evaluated "Where" via a framework plan of site's physical characteristics, "How" communities will interact with the site, "Who" key users will be, and how they will be engaged with the site, and "Who else" might be engaged or affected by the site (institutions, businesses, programs).
- Site divided into four sections, with three potential design directions for each, creating interchangeable options to be pared down for November's presentation of alternative designs: Sections are North Riverfront, South Riverfront, PGE dam & Mill E, and Canemah.
- Flood zone boundaries and seasonal fluctuations of river level considered for impact on each design.
- Preservation and highlighting of site's historical and cultural significance considered for each option.
- Consideration of eight over-arching uses: Falls viewing access, river access and activities, collective gathering and event spaces, habitat restoration and natural history interpretation, honor Native American presence: past, present, and future, paths walkways, and hiking trails, historic re-use and cultural interpretation, and unprogrammed spaces.
- Speculative designs incorporate civic/public spaces, redevelopment sites, habitat restoration, hybrid space for multiple uses, preservation and highlighting of architectural elements or ruins of historic and aesthetic interest where possible, exploratory pathways, and throughways, consideration of river access, and improved

public access with connections to the surrounding community for cars, bicycles, and pedestrian use.

- Next phase of design includes preliminary costing estimates, phasing plan development, defining preferred design alternatives, and seeking public input.
- Reminder of agreement with property owner: Commitment to collaborate, Defining what the riverwalk is, Property owner's commitment, and an Open space option.
- Floor was opened to questions: Bobby Lee urged that each design alternative highlight reuse and renewal options for existing structures and foundations and relations to cost for each option.

## **Whitewater Park Proposal**

Discussion highlights below:

- Noah Siegel took the floor to present a recap of discussions, meetings, gathering of public feedback.
  - Reminder to Partners to consider public interest in regards to the whole site.
  - Reminder to consider design impacts in regards to the whole site.
  - Reminder that under IGA all major design and financial decisions outside defined budget to be brought to Partners for decision.
  - Period for public comment and discussion prior to Partners meeting, and significant feedback was received.
  - Reminder to Partners to consider We Love Clean Rivers' request to integrate potential Olympic scale whitewater park into the riverwalk site separately from consideration of general river access and portages for recreational use.
  - Whitewater park would be a large capital construction project and another defining element of site.
- Noah Siegel presented three clear paths the Partners could pursue regarding the Olympic scale whitewater park proposal:
  - Scenario 1: Whitewater park fully integrated into public project (riverwalk), incurring public costs, delays to design and schedule. Noah noted no Partners have supported this option.
  - Scenario 2: Whitewater park continues as a parallel project to riverwalk, with potential for new costs, delays to riverwalk schedule. We Love Clean Rivers would fundraise and design the project independently.
  - Scenario 3: Whitewater park not included in riverwalk. Riverwalk proceeds as planned with river access still considered, but no Olympic sized whitewater facility.
  - Advisory meetings have been held among Partners groups, as they vote by jurisdictions, to see where each group stands on the whitewater issue.
  - Oregon City originally leaned towards Scenario 2, so Staff Memo to Partners held an option to proceed with Scenario 2.
  - Approximately 1.5 weeks ago, Oregon City endorsed Scenario 3, thus Oregon City and Metro reject the TAC recommendation in favor of proceeding with Scenario 3.
- Commissioner Tootie Smith indicated that Clackamas County will likely continue to vote in line with the other Partners.
- Noah Siegel confirmed that there is a legal access issue, as the riverwalk easement under Metro, held on behalf of Partners, encumbers the entire project site.
  - Scenario 3 indicates that this easement is not available for use towards whitewater project.
  - Scenario 3 is a legal decision on the non-availability of this easement.

- Scenario 3 leaves no opening for whitewater park as part of riverwalk design, direction, or cost.
- Mayor Dan Holladay discussed an example of a recent effort to permit a boat ramp, which involved many agencies and a 5-year process. He raised concerns of permitting for whitewater causing delays for riverwalk.
  - He also summarized the Oregon City decision process based on reviews of the impacts of a whitewater park, concerns of water rights, and potential permitting issues.
- Council President Tom Hughes asked to clarify the finality of the decision on which whitewater park scenario to pursue. The group understanding is that this is a final decision and that future riverwalk design will not include whitewater park as an element.
- Noah Siegel acknowledged the strong desire to keep river access as a part of riverwalk design.
- Mayor Dan Holladay moved in favor of adopting Scenario 3.
- The motion was seconded by Councilor Carlotta Collette.
- The motion was passed unanimously by Partners to adopt Scenario 3.

**Miscellaneous Topics:**

- Commissioner Tootie Smith asked Snøhetta for visual connections relating early public feedback visual boards to the design alternatives to be presented to the public in November. Michelle Delk reassured that Snøhetta will strive to share how feedback translates into designs.
- Mayor Dan Holladay mentioned a Pamplin Media Group video that features him, Tootie Smith, Carlotta Collette, and Kathleen Brennan-Hunter discussing the project.
- Council President Tom Hughes thanked Oregon City for allowing testimony at their recent meeting and closed the Partners meeting.

**ACTION:**

- **Partners will meet in November to discuss the design alternatives for riverwalk.**

**Meeting adjourned at 11:15 AM.**