



City of Bellevue

Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan

Steering Committee Meeting #16

MEETING SUMMARY

DATE: March 19, 2009
TIME: 5:00 PM
LOCATION: Bellevue City Hall

ATTENDEES:

Steering Committee

Doug Leigh
Stefanie Beighle
Hal Ferris
Betina Finley
Merle Keeney
Marcelle Lynde
Bob McMillan
Tom Tanaka
Rich Wagner

City Staff and Consultants

Mike Bergstrom, City of Bellevue
Robin Cole, City of Bellevue
Shelley Marelli, City of Bellevue
Sandy Fischer, EDAW
Brian Scott, EDAW

SUMMARY:

1. Welcome and review of the agenda

Doug Leigh, Steering Committee co-chair, opened the sixteenth meeting of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan Steering Committee at approximately 5:10 pm, once a quorum was present. Doug gave a brief overview of the purpose of the meeting, which is primarily to provide an opportunity for follow up discussion and questions stemming from the March 14, 2009 site walk.

2. Review and approval of October 30, 2008 Meeting Summary

The Committee approved the October 30, 2008 meeting summary as presented, with Hal Ferris abstaining because he had missed the October 30 meeting.

3. Project Schedule Update

Mike Bergstrom gave a brief overview of the planning process to date, noting that the steering committee has been in existence for nearly two years. Although there is approximately one year remaining in the planning process, the Steering Committee's role will be finished before then. Mike reminded the committee that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is in preparation, and once information from that effort is available the committee can finish its evaluation of the alternatives and develop a recommended plan. The Final EIS will be prepared and the recommended plan and the FEIS will then course through the Park Board and Planning Commission review processes, leading to final action by the City Council.

Mike stated that the expected timeframe for publication of the DEIS is late May or early June. He therefore recommended that the committee hold May 21, 2009 available as a tentative meeting date, and be available for a series of meetings in June and July to develop a recommendation. This would allow the committee to be finished prior to August, which is typically a poor month for public meetings.

4. Discussion of March 14, 2009 site walk

Robin Cole introduced this item, stating that both groups on the March 14 site walk had additional city staff help in recording questions that were raised along the walk. Robin would provide answers to many of those questions tonight, but others are still being researched and some won't be answerable until the proposal reaches the project level due to their detailed nature.

Sandy Fischer then presented a short slideshow of the alternatives, showing the alternatives in plan view, and including some cross-section drawings and character photographs. During her presentation, Sandy answered some of the questions that had been asked on the site walk, including:

- On Alternative 1, the curved pier near the swim beach, as presently drawn, extends roughly 340' into the bay and has a total length of approximately 400'. This pier could float or be on fixed pilings; that decision would be based in part on input from permitting authorities at project level design.
- On Alternative 2, a structure that was indicated near the Main Street plaza was described as being a covered but open seating area, allowing for water viewing during inclement weather.
- On both alternatives, the land use proposal is shown the same, consistent with the January 2008 Preliminary Preferred Land Use Plan.

Robin stated that the questions arising on the site walk and responses to them will be formalized, sent to the Steering Committee, and posted on the project website. In the meantime, Robin summarized the following questions and answers to them, organized by the five geographic areas visited on the site walk:

Area 1 – Marina questions focused on existing marina revenues and vacancies as well as the alternatives.

- Bellevue marina—Currently 9 slips are vacant. We have an active waiting list, and our marina manager is working with the list to fill the slips. He is on vacation at this time.
- The 1988 Meydenbauer Bay Marina Finance Plan covers acquisition, maintenance and operation of the marina properties. The revenue is identified by original marina property purchases, so that Piers 1 and 2 are combined and Pier 3 is shown separately. Duplexes for each are included in the revenue.
- Our most current revenue information is a 2008 cash flow update which shows gross revenue and operating costs including management and maintenance services, repairs, utilities, and reserve contributions for debt and contingency, repair and replacement. Revenue projections are being updated and should be available mid year. Robin noted that these figures are rounded, and that more exact numbers would be presented when available.

2008*	Gross Revenue	Expenses	Net Revenue
Piers 1& 2	379,891	125,700	254,000
Pier 3	132,500	64,500	68,000
Totals	512,391	190,200	322,000

*Numbers in the table were revised and reissued with Steering Committee notes in a document entitled "Q & A from March 14 and 19, 2009 meetings"

- We do not have any information on vacancy rates at non city owned marinas.

There was general discussion concerning the width of the arced pier in Alternative 1. Sandy Fischer explained that the width is drawn at roughly 12 feet, but actual width would be determined at the project level and would be influenced by its function. At this stage, it is conceptual.

Hal Ferris asked if Parks has a policy that parks should generate enough revenue to cover the operating costs, and said he was not aware of that as a policy or practice for any other park in the city. His understanding is that beyond repayment of the bonds there is no obligation or expectation that revenue be generated at this park to help support the cost to build or purchase the park. Robin confirmed that there is no such obligation, and clarified further that the general obligation bonds used to purchase the marina could be paid back earlier than 2018. Hal asked if there is any other park in the city that it expected to substantially generate revenue to cover its costs. Robin said she would find out that information for the committee. Merle mentioned the Golf Course and Blueberry Farm as Bellevue Park sites that do generate revenue.

Rich Wagner said that he would like to understand the business part of Piers 1 and 2, and asked what the debt service amount was in 2007. He also asked how much of the expense and income relate to the duplex. Robin agreed to follow up on that as well. Rich also said that based on conversations with the harbor master, there has always been a waiting list for marina slips. Saying that there are nine vacancies might be misleading; they could be in the process of being re-leased. Robin agreed that there is a waiting list, and it is anticipated that the current vacancies will be filled.

Area 2 – Grand Entry/South of Main plan questions addressed undergrounding of overhead wires, clarification of grand entry details, including heights, trees to remain and what type of relationship would implement coordinated redevelopment at SOM, including what the City would fund and what the developer would fund.

- Undergrounding overhead wire is the goal. It typically occurs with redevelopment of property or as a public-sponsored street improvement project.
- Identification of trees to remain is a project level design detail
- Mike Bergstrom explained that the Bayvue East parcel is seen as a potential contribution to SOM coordinated redevelopment to provide parking for park use or other public benefit. He reiterated that details of coordinated redevelopment would be determined at the project level.
- In response to questions about the grand entry in Alternative 2, Sandy Fischer explained how the proposed improvements between the café and street are built into the hillside, taking advantage of the grades and affording the public views of the water. Portions of the structure are above grade, but are not intended to obstruct views. Sandy described the plaza steps and covered but open seating area in the plaza to allow for viewing during inclement weather.

Merle Keeney asked whether structures on the kite parcels would interfere with views from 100th and Main. Sandy responded that it shouldn't, due to site topography. She stated that as part of the environmental analysis, EDAW is doing some 3D modeling that will help illustrate viewpoints.

Hal Ferris asked Sandy why the elevated pier was shown at 35 feet above the water and not 20 feet. Sandy responded that the concept was to keep the elevated viewpoint level from mid slope. She reminded him that the element is conceptual and modifications to it could be recommended by the committee in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Area 3 – Upper Block questions included mid block crossings, provisions for bicycle lanes on Lake Washington Boulevard, and street trees bordering Whalers' Cove.

- Mid block crossings are a project level design detail, and traffic and pedestrian safety will need to be considered
- The recently adopted Ped/Bike Plan indicates:
 - “High” priority for wide bicycle shoulder (note: “wide shoulder” can also include a “shared lane”) on south side of LWB (component of Lake to Lake Trail system).

- “High” priority for wide bicycle shoulders on both sides of Main from 100th to Bellevue Way (component of Lake to Lake Trail system).
- The row of trees between Whalers’ Cove and the developed road appear to be on the Right of Way. Disposition is a project level design detail.

Bob MacMillan asked about contemplated street improvements, including bicycle facilities, along Lake Washington Blvd between 100th Ave NE and the bridge to the west. He did not know what the right-of-way boundaries are in that area and what could be accommodated within them. Mike Bergstrom responded that he was unaware of a street improvement proposal independent of the park project, and that he believed the right-of-way width to be 60 feet. Bob noted that it is a tight 60 feet due to topography.

Hal Ferris noted that much of the road improvements suggested on the drawings along Lake Washington Blvd are along privately-owned property, and there may be insufficient right-of-way width to accomplish these improvements. If these improvements are not possible, they should not be shown. They suggest there might be an enticing way to get people to walk along the south edge of Lake Washington Blvd, but it’s not a very comfortable walking path right now.

There were questions about the location of the south right-of-way boundary of Lake Washington Blvd with respect to Whaler’s Cove, and the row of trees and the drop-off in topography. Committee members said it would be helpful to have some information, short of a survey, to give an approximate indication of the location of the right-of-way edge. Robin said that it appears the trees are located within the road right of way. Rich Wagner stated that it might be possible to estimate the location of the right-of-way edge based on the location of the existing street improvement. Hal noted that aerial information is available that could help determine this.

Tom Tanaka informed the committee that the Ped/Bike plan does not provide funding for the recommendations on Lake Washington Boulevard or Main Street.

Area 4 – Park Core questions addressed emergency access, residential piers, swimming beach relocation, and relationship of community building to balance of park core.

- For emergency access, Whaler’s Cove would continue to be served by 99th and from down below via the promenade, which will serve as emergency access.
 - If heading west along the promenade, they would access via 99th;
 - if heading east they would access via Meydenbauer Way.
- Committee members were concerned about aesthetic impacts of emergency access and want to minimize those impacts. Emergency access can be accomplished in a variety of ways, and the appropriate one will be determined at project level design
- Why is the swim beach relocated in both alternatives? The swim beach is relocated to avoid impacting the mouth of the daylighted stream and associated wetlands. This is also consistent with the early concept for which the SC expressed preference, that is, moving from natural to more active.
- How large is the proposed swim beach? The current swim beach is about 75 feet long. Both alternatives show an enlarged swim beach, with Alternative 1 about twice the size of the existing and Alternative 2 slightly larger than Alternative 1
- Retaining the residential piers is not envisioned.

Sandy Fischer responded to questions about the relationship of the community building to the balance of the park core. She explained how the steep grades allow building into the hillside which minimizes the above grade structure from the street side and provides light and views from two stories on the water side. She pointed out the viewing terrace and vehicle pull-off.

Hal Ferris said the garage wall was visible from the water side and would need to be landscaped. Sandy assured him that a full landscaping plan would be done at the project level.

Betina Finley wondered if we wouldn't want to have more of a pier presence to allow people an opportunity to experience the water more than just the single pier in Alternative 1 would provide. Robin Cole felt that this idea could be addressed at the time the Steering Committee formulates its recommendation. Sandy Fischer added that depending on how the moorage piers are managed, it might be possible to have public access on the same pier as leased moorage. Mike Bergstrom clarified that the committee should not assume that we will be allowed to replace existing over-water coverage with new over-water coverage on a 1:1 replacement basis.

Rich Wagner noted that Alternatives 1 and 2 each show a community building, and both appear to be very large scale buildings. They appear similar in scale to the Whaler's Cove buildings, and they appear to have a lot of square footage. He questioned whether this is really needed, or if it takes away from the park feel. Mike Bergstrom responded that this could be discussed during the upcoming evaluation phase, and just because both alternatives show these buildings does not mean that one must be included. There could be no building, or a building smaller than shown.

Area 5 – Ravine questions focused on the daylighted stream and emergency access in the natural ravine area.

- Does emergency access need to go west of 99th? Robin indicated that we are still looking into whether emergency access needs to be provided in natural areas.
- What are the impacts to existing improvements at the beach park from daylighting the stream? Daylighting the stream, either partially or fully, would require that the existing restroom be removed.
- With partial daylighting in Alternative 2, the existing public pier on the western park boundary, and the existing parking could remain.
- Stream configuration, width and depth will require additional engineering and design, and is project level design work.

Bob MacMillan noted that both 99th Ave NE and 100th Ave SE are steep roads, and asked whether, given today's construction standards, those roads would be viable? Mike Bergstrom responded that when property is privately-owned, access needs to be provided, and that access must deal with the conditions that exist. He said that a 15% grade is often used as a standard for maximum road steepness, and he believes that both these roads have a grade of approximately 13%.

5. Public comment

D.R. O'Hara, Sunset Community Association, stated that the process has taken too long, and asked where are the base requirements, ground rules and assumptions, program work breakdown structure, and responsibility assignment matrix. He asked at what point do we see costs and schedules. He stated that committee members' biases are evident, and that they are being loose and fast with city-owner resources. The plan needs to be realistic. The marina is not broke, so don't fix it; it is a revenue source and an asset. The committee needs to be fiscally responsible. The Steering Committee needs to provide direction and be responsive to the city owners. Moving the swim beach would be throwing away prior capital investment and tearing up a perfectly fine infrastructure. Does this really buy anything with the environment? Project will need city-owner buy-in, and ultimately this will go to Council and the Council is accountable to all of us. You talk about the input, but you're not reflecting it. Docks have been acquired with property purchases and they will be frittered away. Existing docks could be connected to separate boaters from swimmers. Loss of revenue will be shouldered by the homeowners and city-owners; revenue should be reinvested in repairs for Pier 3. Marina tenants are residents. Don't let the EIS hold you up. Removal of the private docks is irresponsible. Committee needs to give direction; otherwise, our time is being wasted.

Betty Schwind, Bayshore East Condominium, stated that you're spinning your wheels, and are not thinking about this as a lake. Planning more things on the land will clog up the lake. The water should be for boats and for young people learning how to sail. Too many things are being planned and is ruining the beauty of what is normally a lake. People can get close to the water by taking the bridge. People don't need something for walking out on the water. It's not a good idea to have power boats zooming in and out when people are taking sailboat lessons and doing similar things. Since the first meeting she has

attended it has been exactly the same thing all the time. The worst thing is closing 100th, which is cutting off a whole community.

Marv Peterson, Meydenbauer Bay Neighbors Association, felt that the site walk was quite an experience and expressed his appreciation for it; it gave an opportunity to see a different perspective, especially from the Cich house. Looking down at the lake from that point is exciting. From that point to the bridge can be opened up for a beautiful and majestic view. That is a park; it's simple, you can see the terrain, the houses can be taken out, you can make trails, and that will really look good. The connection to the other side with the promenade is difficult. The concept of closing 100th became an issue. The associations he represents are 100% against the closure. It is crucial to have it open. Marv referenced the yellow signs in the room that represent "points of impact". These signs were in place along the site walk to indicate where different associations are located and their issues of concern, so that those concerns can be considered. We want the park as much as you do, and we want it done right. You have a hard dilemma, and the current financial situation will have a dramatic impact. Need to be realistic, and simplify the project. A lot of the plan elements probably are not going to happen. Will there really be a benefit of daylighting the stream for the dollar value? It's beautiful just like it is. Stay clear, keep it clean, work on a quality of the bay. Noise is a problem. Safety will be a huge problem, especially with the sailing program. Keeping transient moorage outward is smart thing to do for safety; need to protect the no wake zone. Marv stated that the following speakers would each address different issues and explain who they represent.

Ray Waldmann, Whaler's Cove Homeowner's Association, commended the committee for its patience, and expressed hope that they will arrive at a recommendation that addresses some of the comments they've been hearing. We're in favor of the park, and are the closest neighbors to the park. There is little space between the Whaler's Cove buildings and the lake. Currently there is a parking lot in that area; need to think about how the piers will be served. He is glad to hear you're aware of the need for emergency access to Whaler's Cove and the marina. He wants to see no commercial uses anywhere in the park, but especially in their front yard. Anything along that boardwalk that attracts trash, crowds, noise, after hours activity, it will be detrimental to the spirit of the park. He would like the vendor kiosks removed from the final recommendation. He looks forward to commenting on the formal recommendation.

Aaron Dichter, 10000 Meydenbauer Condominium, will discuss marina-related issues. As a side comment, he questioned the depth of the relocated swimming beach, stating that it might be deeper than the existing swimming beach. There is a recognized boating community in Bellevue. We talk a lot about many forms of boating, but permanent moorage is discussed kind of on the side, and it is the only revenue-producer we have. Bellevue Marina is the only public marina in Bellevue. Tacoma, Everett, Bremerton, Kennewick, Bellingham, Edmonds, Olympia, and Seattle all have recent investment in marinas. Pier 3 should not be eliminated, it should be improved. Enjoy the revenues it provides.

Pamela Ebsworth, 10000 Meydenbauer Condominium, expressed her appreciation for the site walk. It was helpful for getting a sense of the park's space. Her condominium owners continue to be concerned about the possible closure of 100th, because their front door is on that street. Guests, services, mail carrier, all come in that entrance; need to have access to their front door. Also need space for parking and maneuvering room for garbage trucks and fire truck and other vehicles. Emergency vehicles serve 10000 Meydenbauer, the Yacht Club, The Vue Condominium, and park-goers. Not clear how the elevated viewing platform and its support elements would work with parked guest vehicles or mail vehicles, etc. She recently witnessed a hook and ladder truck spending roughly 1-1/2 hours trying to wend its way out of this area. It's a safety issue, so keeping 100th open is desired. How do we get emergency vehicles in and out of the area, and how does our building function, if 100th is closed? Also, residents of the Bellevue-Medina area use 100th as a cut-off to avoid congestion on Main St. More development is planned along Main St, how do we deal with that? Don't want to be staring into a restaurant, parking lot, or elevator. The property is extraordinary, and we have the opportunity to keep it as a park. We don't need latte stands, t-shirt vendors, followed by tattoo parlors or whatever. We don't need things that will attract skateboarders and creating a liability. This should be a respite from urbanization.

Del Hoffman, Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club, feels that Alternative 1 is 80%-90% of the way there, once some of these other issues are addressed. Alternative 1 is a very good configuration for the boating community. The opposite shoreline is closer than you think, but Alternative 1 is not a bad configuration, minus the things that people are talking about. It works without the elevated pier, provides safety, and keeps power boats and jet skis separated from other activities. We support keeping 100th open.

Betty Mastropaolo, Bayshore East Condominium, thanked the group for its time and effort. She stated that residents living south of Main St have three access routes to Main – 100th, 101st, and 102nd. 101st has only a stop sign, and traffic has gotten so bad in the last two years that you can't turn left onto Main St. 102nd has a traffic light, but there is a lot of pedestrian activity there, so drivers must wait for pedestrians to cross before turning left. 100th does not have much pedestrian activity and it does have a traffic light, so that's the route she uses. Has there been or will there be a comprehensive traffic plan done, and will there be actual counts of cars that use these roads?

Kathy Hodge, Astoria Condominium, stated that the residents of the Astoria are mainly in favor of keeping 100th open. The main consideration is the busy nature of Main St; traffic is a real issue. The Cich property on the site walk was a pleasant surprise; the view is outstanding, that's where the concentration should be. She stated that floating structures on the lake will not work, as there are whitecaps. Should think about an elevated (fixed) structure.

Anita Neil, Shoreland Drive, stated that she was filling in for Wendy Lehman. Residents in the upper block have concerns about increased traffic and parking, particularly if 100th is closed, they may be even more impacted by traffic taking shortcuts around or through the block. Current uses in that block are built to about 40 units an acre, and the city's suggestion is to allow redevelopment at 60 units an acre. 45 units an acre should be enough redevelopment incentive. Do we need more congestion coming into this area? As someone who lives across the bay, she doesn't want to see the density increased or increased traffic; it's a noise factor. It's the "kiss" principle - Keep it simple, Simon. Where will all the money come from to pay for these ideas? We are in tough times. Let's stop reinventing the wheel, make it a nice park, and keep it simple.

Madelaine Georgette, 10000 Meydenbauer Condominium, stated that the Meydenbauer Bay Neighbors Association submitted a different alternative to be analyzed in the EIS, but never received confirmation that it was received or whether it is being included in the EIS. (Robin Cole responded that all people who submitted comments or suggested alternatives during the EIS scoping period were sent confirmation that they were received. She further responded that the alternatives being reviewed in the EIS are those that are before us tonight). Madelaine asked whether a cul-de-sac was being considered near 10000 Meydenbauer in response to all the issues raised earlier tonight and to provide access to their building. Have we considered pedestrian bridges across 100th? Since topography is so steep at 100th, why haven't we considered a switchback access near the northwest end of the park from Lake Washington Blvd? This hasn't even been considered. There is residential, commercial, and intense traffic uses in some locations, but not at this location. Why hasn't anybody thought about using a series of gradually sloping switchbacks to bring people down? Madelaine asked that the committee members, either individually or as a group, visit Luther Burbank Park on Mercer Island. It's a beautiful natural park without fancy amenities and is well used for picnicing, swimming, dog play; it's beautiful, natural, and peaceful. It used to be a regional park serving all of King County.

Dan Lewis, Paccar, thanked staff and the committee for their work. Paccar has been a long-term resident of the marina, and appreciate all that the marina has offered to the residents of Bellevue. Dan asked if a comparative analysis has been done on the benefits and impacts of reducing the number of moorage slips. The schematics do not make clear what the access is to the piers, how vehicle access is granted to Piers 1 and 2, and how cars and pedestrians will be separated. He suggested a couple of cross-sections to illustrate this. We don't want to mix the vehicles with the pedestrians. Access needs include everything from unloading coolers and bringing bags of sails down to the boats, to removing trash at the end of the day.

Doug Leigh then closed the public comment period and asked the committee if there were any other questions.

Marcelle Lynde asked about the timing of the EIS. Merle Keeney asked whether we would have that before the committee's next meeting, and if not, what would be the purpose of that meeting? Robin Cole responded that we would focus on the schedule and process for reacting to the Draft EIS and getting committee recommendations completed.

Marcelle stated that the Final EIS would then be prepared, reflecting the recommendation. Mike Bergstrom added that the May 21 meeting should be considered tentative in case things are not as far along as we'd hope. There will not be a meeting if there is no purpose to be served. Marcelle clarified that it is very possible for alternatives to change between the Draft EIS and the Final EIS. The alternatives reflected in the Draft EIS are not necessarily what is going to happen.

Doug Leigh pointed out that during the site walk, the groups did not explore the upper part of the ravine. He encouraged the other committee members to drive or walk around that area, as there are some significant changes being considered.

Rich Wagner stated that he was unable to attend the site walk, but understood that the attendees were not able to walk out on Pier 2. He's sorry to hear that was the case, for several reasons. The quality of construction is top-notch, and the design of Pier 2 in relation to Pier 1 takes up the least amount of real estate for the bigger boats to maneuver. He further observed that, while the end of Pier 2 is currently rented to a tenant, if it were accessible to the public during park hours it would provide access to the middle of the bay, which is stunning. Rich envisions the possibility of keeping that pier and putting benches or tables at the end, thereby utilizing what we have, which is as well built as we can get.

6. Meeting adjourned

With no further comment, Doug Leigh adjourned the meeting at 7:10 pm. The next Steering Committee meeting date has not yet been set.

PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS (who signed in):

Patrick Bannon
Bob Buckley
Aaron Dichter
Pamela Ebsworth
John Ellis
Madelaine Georgette
Kathy Hodge
Del Hoffman
Ron Kinoshita
Wendy Lehman
Dan Lewis
Betty Mastropaolo
Doug McCoughey
Pat Montgomery
D.R. O'Hara
Marv Peterson
Bill Reams
Betty Schwind
Anita Skoog
Ray Waldmann
Mark Williams