

Minutes of April 16, 2014 Meeting
Nichols Basin West Edge Trail Planning
Marina Center Commission Road
5:30 p.m.

Present: Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Members: Todd Anderson, Larry Brown, Steve Gates, Jaime Mack, Bob Naito, Jeff Pickhardt, Heather Staten, Greg Stiegel, Hoby Streich (Port Commissioner), Brett VandenHeuvel. Port Staff: Michael McElwee, Laurie Borton. Walker|Macy Consultants: Christopher Miller, Mike Zilis.

Media: Ben Mitchell, Hood River News

Absent: PAC Members Arthur Babitz, Pepi Gerald, Lori Stirn, Cindy Thieman, Cindy Walbridge were absent. No other Port Commissioners were in attendance.

Public: Sign-in Sheet Attached

Port Executive Director Michael McElwee opened the meeting at 5:35 p.m. welcoming everyone to the final of four scheduled Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and public meetings for the Nichols Basin West Edge Trail bicycle/pedestrian path. PAC and public comment from the March 18 meeting have resulted in further refinements to the concept plan— one concept illustrating a path with limited funding and one illustrating what the path might look like if additional funding is secured. Next steps will include funding considerations in the Port's FY 2014-15 budget and continued Commission discussion for a go-no go decision on moving forward with the plan. Action was then taken to approve the minutes from last month's meeting:

Motion: Move to approve minutes from the March 18, 2014 meeting
Move: Gates
Second: Pickhardt
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous vote of PAC members present

Project consultant Mike Zilis noted the "Preferred Vision Plan" Waker|Macy would be presenting has resulted from PAC and public comment from past meetings and discussions on key issues, program activities, and past concept plans. (A link to this PowerPoint presentation can be found on the Port website at <http://www.portofhoodriver.com/NBP.php>.) Briefly summarized, the south launch has been broadened directly into the water (although he commented the launch is under Naito ownership¹ and would require collaboration); there is good connectivity to streets and intersections from the trail; the south sea wall dock has been repositioned for use on both sides without adding additional load to the bulkhead; and additional parking has been added adjacent to the south dock. The *Vision Plan* also includes a two-story building set back from the dock with 'tuck under' storage; the pedestrian connection from N. 2nd Street to Nichols Basin that's adjacent to the gas station is more grand; and there are a variety of building sizes (uses are not identified). To the north, the *Plan* no longer includes a roundabout; grading, with slopes less than 5%, will be a big part of the trail, lawns have been terraced and incorporate low sitting walls, and steps have been broadened. Diagonal and parallel parking on

¹ Naito commented his project is currently in appeals so he doesn't know if a collaborative effort on the south launch will be five months or five years.

both sides of N. 1st Street are included. Zilis did note the Vision Plan does need to be revised to show a restroom at the north end and the existing riparian vegetation. Christopher Miller, Walker|Macy consultant, commented the trail as shown on the Phase One Concept could be built with the current \$120,000 grant but that additional grants would be required to allow for enhancements that are estimated at between \$250,000-275,000. Planning for a phased construction, which will rely on grants, will be essential so that nothing has to be changed or taken out at a later date. PAC members inquired about costs on project elements; Miller responded that they didn't have all those answers because their approach was to first find out what PAC priorities were and then see where the dollars end up.

The following comments/questions were heard from PAC members regarding the Phase One Plan:

- People will get used to the path and then be even more pleased when enhancements happen. A contrary opinion was voiced that the path reduces user access and it would be disruptive and the plan did not satisfy the challenge of providing for current and future uses and the concern for the area being parked-out still exist. Can North 1st Street be modified now to accommodate more parking? Does the possibility exist for funding support from future development or City funding? Can the Port proceed with the basic path if there was other funding besides the grants? With the grant in hand, get grading done as much as can be. Steps and walls are expensive so alternatives should be considered.

McElwee commented the Port does need to look elsewhere for funding but he is cautious about starting the project if only one grant is received because he believes it would not be possible to do only a portion of the trail. He also said the PAC should meet again when the outcome of the other two grant applications is known.

At 6:40 p.m. McElwee opened the meeting to public comment, calling first on those who had signed up to speak. The time limit was 2 minutes per person, 30 minutes maximum.

Susan Crowley: Recommended the consultants go out on a SUP and have the experience of moving the equipment. She is concerned that if the project moves forward the path will block off current access; she said more discussion is needed. Parking is still a concern for her and Phase One should integrate parking on N. 1st and on Portway.

Greg Stiegel (PAC member): Hook improvements are being considered and this would be an option for spreading people out. He said that seat walls can be limiting for equipment; he asked about dock launches. PAC member Todd Anderson responded that if the dock is low enough the transition should be smooth for beginners.

Chuck Gehling: He said that Crowley's points were well founded. The plan will be a big change for everyone to get used to. He also stated that if the money is available the project should move forward and do what can be done.

Chris Gann: She supported Crowley's points. She was appreciative that public ideas had been incorporated. She suggested that for Phase One and future phases there needs to be designated areas at each end as red zones for drop-off only and that it needs to be enforced. Gann also said it will be challenging to find the shortest distance to get to an area of use, and that while the dock is an option it

would not be her first choice. She said the path should be done but suggested the use of softscape first unless concrete is needed to support the path and stairs.

Susan Froehlich: She recommends removing the meridians on North 1st Street for added parking. She also recommended that Phase One include docks to get people used to this entry point. She also thinks that stairs at the north end aren't necessary and she would like a shorter distance to the water.

Josh Belsky: He supports Froehlich's idea to remove the North 1st Street meridians and include angled parking on 1st.

Linda Maddox: She supports comments made tonight by the ladies. She is concerned with the distance for carrying equipment; she is also concerned with parking on the south and that only 9 spaces are available on the adjoining Naito property. Maddox believes it is a good idea to plant trees first but they will need irrigation and she asked if lawns make sense. She is also concerned with the number of buildings shown on the concept plan. Maddox said the plan is pretty, but does it work for Hood River?

Public comment concluded at 7:10 p.m. If the path can be done it will be an added commitment to the network of maintaining open space for perpetuity without any income to the Port. McElwee noted, however, that funding language in a Disposition and Development Agreements (DDAs) with developers can be a start. McElwee also said he wished there was a solution to the parking issue that consistently challenges the Port. He does not know the future for this accommodation; whether the parking is paid, pass-regulated, shared, or simply not being able to accommodate everyone. McElwee then reviewed zoning and stated the Port will be looking ahead in the next year for modifications. He said follow-up conversations with the PAC in June/July (or sooner) when funding is known will be warranted. With additional funding sources unknown until summer, the Port Commission will need to make a decision soon on Phase One if the December 2015 project completion date is to be met. McElwee stated that it would be his recommendation to the Commission that the project is worth pursuing. McElwee also noted that it would be in the budget to look at parking.

Both McElwee and Commissioner Streich thanked the Project Advisory Committee members for their time and input into this design process. This thank you was also extended to audience members who provided comments in the four public meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Prepared by Laurie Borton