

South Waterfront Greenway Plan approved by Design Commission

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

With the osprey roost issue solved, at least in concept, the Portland Design Commission approved the Portland Bureau of Parks and Recreation's South Waterfront Greenway Master Plan last month.



Osprey family nest on the west bank of the Willamette River at South Waterfront. (Photo courtesy of Paul Johnson)

The Greenway Plan contains \$9.5 million worth of trails, recreation improvements and habitat for a swath of waterfront 1.2 miles long and 100 feet wide along the west bank of the Willamette River. However, lack of a dock in the Greenway Plan resulted in a less than unanimous vote.

At a previous meeting a major stumbling block turned out to be the Bureau's plans for the relocation of a nesting site occupied in season by an osprey over the last five years.

Greenway construction will require the Park Bureau to relocate the nest. The Park Bureau proposed an alternative site on a "dolphin," an upright piling, but neighbors said it was too far away from the bird's chosen site.

These neighbors, with the assistance of the South Waterfront Dog Club, have constructed a pole 40 feet tall and weighing eight tons as a site.

Last month, Park Bureau staff said

they would leave the osprey nest where it is this year. Next year partisans will move the pole to a nearby private property, and the bird will choose between this and the Park Bureau's proposed site. This seemed to please interested neighbors.

Another issue was a proposed light watercraft dock, long a part of the project. Park Bureau staff said they had encountered resistance from the National Marine Fisheries Service, which safeguards endangered fish species and sees the pilings for a dock as a hiding place for young fish predators.

Park Bureau staffer Liz Moorhead said the Office of Healthy Working Rivers is preparing a comprehensive look at the city's docks, due for completion in 2013.

The Park Bureau remains committed to providing a dock, Moorhead said, but for now they were "decoupling" it from the project and proceeding.

Commission member Ben Kaiser expressed disappointment about this decision. "At one point this was the driving force for the whole project," he said.

"Because of fear of some agency, we're disconnecting ourselves from the river. Who knows when it will happen? There were just three boats on the river yesterday, and there could be hundreds."

Kaiser ultimately cast the sole vote against approval of the Greenway Plan.

Commission chair Gwen Millius cautioned against "letting the perfect get in the way of the good. Getting people closer to the river is an undeniable good. This is not our last opportunity. I just can't see holding up the whole project because of the dock."

Fulton Park Community Center advocates lobby City Council

Advocates for the Fulton Park Community Center, which the Portland Bureau of Parks and Recreation has offered for closure if the City Council asks for budget cuts of six percent or more, made their point at a budget hearing last month.

More than 150 people attended a City-sponsored public Budget Forum at Cleveland High School, and conspicuous among them were people wearing red attire, which for the evening at least connoted advocacy for retaining Park facilities.

Most of these people were Fulton Park Community Center advocates, but a few were southerners protesting the proposed closure of Buckman Pool, also on the Park Bureau's list of potential cuts.

In an on-site poll conducted with electronic devices, the top priority for general fund spending of those present was parks and recreation, followed in order of support by public safety-related programs, public utilities, transportation and community development.

In another poll those present were asked to prioritize their top safety concerns; the results in order were traffic safety followed closely by drug dealing, thefts from vehicles, gang activity, and burglary.



Fulton Park Community Center may be spared from proposed budget cuts by Portland Parks and Recreation. (Photo courtesy of Isabel Souza)

Portland Mayor Sam Adams conducted much of the meeting, and three of the other four City Council members attended; Commissioner Dan Saltzman was on a trip to Egypt.

Commissioner Nick Fish told *The Post* that he was impressed by the support for Parks programs, but noted that an earlier demographic quiz indicated that those at the Forum were not at all representative of the City as a whole. "It's a snapshot in time," he said.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz wore red in a conscious show of support for Fulton Park Community Center. Noting that its closure is estimated to save \$75,000 she said, "I'm sure we could come up with that money somewhere."

- Lee Perlman

Earth Day 2012: The Next Seven Generations

April 20 & 21, 2012

A regional conference hosted by the Earth & Spirit Council and Portland Community College Sylvania Campus at PCC Sylvania, 12000 SW 49th Ave., Portland, OR

The conference brings together Native Elders, Naturalists, Activists, Artists, Healers and Environmental Leaders to engage in dialogue and action around the question. *"What gives us hope and heart to keep working for the earth as we face growing challenges?"*

To register, go to www.earthandspirit.org

FRIDAY, APRIL 20TH

OPENING CEREMONY 6 PM - FREE

Friday evening will begin with an opening ceremony that includes the lighting of an outdoor ceremonial fire and American & African drumming.

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Following the opening ceremony, a Youth and Elder Panel will convene. Speakers include:



Grandmother Agnes Pilgrim



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WORKSHOPS 9 AM - 4 PM
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❖ Guest panelists from Friday's opening event will conduct three-hour intensive workshops exploring issues of sustainability and how indigenous wisdom is relevant to the problems and solutions of today.

❖ Smaller workshops hosted by environmental, tribal and spiritual leaders will feature a wide variety of educational, hands-on activities that focus on the connections between environmental and spiritual challenges.

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Thanks for Your Cooperation



In April, the **Portland Water Bureau's** work to install a new water supply pipeline under **SW Naito Pkwy.** will move to sections of other streets on the pipe route: SW Caruthers St., SW Water Ave., SW Baker St., SW Hooker St., and SW 1st Ave.

This work will be done during daylight hours, normally 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, and will impact traffic in residential areas. There may be detours and street closures.

The work on SW Naito Pkwy. is not complete. In the months ahead, the contractor must return briefly to make a connection to an existing pipeline on SW Clay St.

The Portland Water Bureau wants to thank the public, especially motorists and the Marriott Hotel, for their patience while we work to upgrade the city's century old water system.

