

NOTES FROM THE OCT. 1, 2015 COLONNADE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Drafted by Chris Leman

Attending: Art Tuftee (Community Design Liaison), Bob Breskovich (nearby apartment owner); Tyson Cecka (Parkour Visions), Shelly DaRonche (Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center), Jim Davis (Feet First); Pam Kliment (Seattle Dept. of Parks and Recreation), Chris Leman (Eastlake Community Council, project administrator), Sharon LeVine (Citizens for Off-Leash Areas), Mike Sidwell (Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance).
Guests: Nathan Arnold and Farley Harding.

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Budget. The main unexpended funds are \$3550 from the \$21,000 contract with our planning and design consultant J.A. Brennan (the equivalent of about 38 hours of their staff time). They need 12 hours to do the cost estimates of various design features as required in their contract, plus a few hours to update their concluding memo; thus leaving a little over 20 hours for any final work on the schematic design and any needed consultations, including, if required, a final presentation to the Park Department's ProView committee (if required). To conserve these precious resources, J.S. Brennan staff were not at the Sept. 24 public meeting nor the Oct. 1 Steering Committee.

Review of draft schematic plan and subarea plans. This was the first Steering Committee meeting since June 15, with a main purpose thus being to review the extensive public comment received in the intervening months via the July 8 public meeting, July 19 outdoor open house, and Sept. 24 public meeting, as well as from the on-line survey and from e-mails and phone calls. The public comments mostly regarded J.A. Brennan's draft schematic plan and the four subarea plans submitted respectively by the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance; skatepark advocates Sean Kelly and Micah Shapiro; Parkour Visions; and on behalf of the bouldering/climbing community, Nathan Pauli. The public comments on these five conceptual designs were overwhelmingly positive.

In the Steering committee agenda e-mail prior to the Oct. 1 meeting, members were asked to "think hard about what further modifications are needed to finalize" the schematic plan, "including how much to include from the subarea features designed for us by several user groups." At the Oct. 1 meeting, the Steering Committee members were again pressed for any changes from what had been proposed and were uniformly positive about the schematic plan and the subarea designs submitted by the user groups.

The Sept. 30 e-mail also stated, “A particular priority at tomorrow’s Steering Committee meeting will be to discuss whether to include in the long-range schematic plan three proposals that have come up in the last few weeks,” an all-ages outdoor gym, a labyrinth walk, and public art.

All-ages outdoor gym. Nathan Arnold and Farley Harding presented to the Oct. 1 Steering Committee meeting their proposal for an all-ages outdoor gym. An informal outdoor gym is already in existence at Gas Works Park, but as redevelopment planning is focusing on children’s features, a little over a week earlier, planner David Graves of the Park Department had encouraged the two to approach the Colonnade planning process with their proposal. They proposed use of the flat area (now partly occupied by and planned for mountain bike features) that is just north of the off-leash area, with a desire for it to be lighted at night. They distributed a preliminary design at the Sept. 24 public meeting, and on Sept. 30 submitted an updated design.

The Steering Committee members were receptive to the proposal for an all-ages outdoor gym, but saw problems with the proposed site, including its proximity to homes, and especially that there is already a mountain biking feature there, with a plan to improve it further for mountain biking novices.

Labyrinth walk. The Steering Committee members also discussed a proposal for a labyrinth walk, a traditional maze of concentric circle pathways that the walker enters from the outside and eventually reaches the center, combining exercise and contemplation. Typical size is 25 to 35 feet in diameter; ideally the space would be lighted and flat, with benches. The location initially proposed was the same one as proposed for the all-ages outdoor gym, and for the same reasons, the Steering Committee could not support that site, but encouraged the concept of a walking labyrinth and a continued search for a better location.

Public art features. In the Sept. 30 e-mail, Steering Committee members were asked to think about four issues regarding the place of art in the schematic plan: “(a) Should an art or design theme (e.g. color, font, or symbol) unify many Colonnade features? (b) Should some of the columns themselves be painted, perhaps for the purpose of wayfinding? (c) Should art objects be commissioned specific to the different user sectors (bikes, dogs, skateboards, exercise, etc.)? and (d) Should a monumental-scale sculpture be placed somewhere quite visible from outside Colonnade, as a signature image and a way to draw the public in?” (Parkour’s Colin MacDonald had submitted a drawing of a “Kraken”, a mythical sea monster resembling a giant squid or octopus, a parallel to the Fremont Troll). Nathan Arnold’s drawing for the all-ages outdoor gym also suggests a metal octopus spreading above the exercise facilities. The Steering

Committee discussion agreed on the importance of public art in Colonnade, but time was running short and little progress was made toward a consensus on the above four questions.