

**Design and Landmarks Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 9, 2009**

Rescheduled from October 28, 2009

Members Present

Becky Ives, Chair
Siri Bernard, Vice Chair
Greg Hemer
Patty Wisner

Members Absent

Sarah Knaup

Staff Present

Katie Mangle, Planning Director
Brett Kever, Associate Planner
Ryan Marquardt, Associate Planner
Damien Hall, City Attorney
JoAnn Herrigel, Community Services Director

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ives called the Design and Landmarks Committee (DLC) meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

2. MEETING MINUTES

a. September 23, 2009

DLC Member Hemer moved to approve the September 23, 2009, DLC meeting minutes as presented. Vice Chair Bernard seconded the motion, which passed 3 to 0 to 1 with Chair Ives abstaining.

3. INFORMATION ITEMS—None

4. WORKSESSION ITEM—None

5. APPLICATION REVIEW ITEMS

a. Recommendation on Design Review for Riverfront Park

Applicant: City of Milwaukie, represented by JoAnn Herrigel, Community Services Director
Owner: City of Milwaukie
Address: Milwaukie Riverfront Park
File: DR-09-01

Damien Hall, City Attorney, reviewed the Design Review process, noting that the DLC meeting was not a formal public hearing, but a public meeting open for public comment as part of the overall land use review of the minor quasi-judicial application. He described the meeting procedure, concluding that the goal was for the DLC to arrive at a consensus about a specific recommendation to the Planning Commission.

All DLC members declared that they had visited the site. However, no DLC member declared a conflict of interest, bias, or conclusion from a site visit. No DLC member declared an ex parte contact related to the application.

Ryan Marquardt, Associate Planner, presented the staff report via PowerPoint. He clarified that the term “water fountain” referred to the water feature and not to drinking fountains. He deferred a question about the accuracy of the restroom building photographs to the Applicant.

JoAnn Herrigel, Community Services Director, reviewed the history, timeline, and progression of the Riverfront Park project via PowerPoint. The Riverfront Board held workshops with boat ramp designers and operators, toured other riverfront facilities, held open houses, and conducted a public survey in which 11% of Milwaukie’s population provided input about the park’s uses and design. The proposed project integrated concepts preferred by the community, but noted that incorporating the community’s many needs and ideas was challenging. She also noted the many restraints that affected the development and design of the small site, including several permitting agencies’ requirements. These various restraints had influenced the deliberate placement of the needed uses and assorted park elements. The selection of elements was fairly inclusive so far, and more people would weigh in on the design as the application went through the DLC and Planning Commission processes. The site’s history and geology also influenced the park’s design, as well as the choice of materials which did not detract from the surroundings.

Gil Williams, David Evans & Associates, presented more detailed information about the Riverfront Park project via PowerPoint. He prefaced that the graphic software did not accurately reflect the intended design. His additional comments and responses to questions from the DLC were as follows:

- He reiterated the desire to connect downtown Milwaukie to the Willamette River, noting the challenge of crossing McLoughlin Blvd which presented a huge barrier in many ways. Initially, a visual connection would be made by enhancing the view along McLoughlin Blvd and providing more visual access to the river.
- The Applicant tried to create and divide the park space into specific uses, for both function and form. Pedestrians and automobiles would be separated, for example, and both active and passive recreation areas were created as well as more contemplative areas.
- The Ipe wood proposed for the railing was a very hard, durable wood that would last 50+ years in this type of outdoor, public use facility. Ipe is a plantation grown, South American hardwood that is certified sustainably harvested.
- The water quality swales shown in the PowerPoint copy distributed to the DLC would be planted and provide maintenance of stormwater and runoff from the parking areas. The City preferred the stormwater be filtrated on site; therefore at-grade planters would catch much of the runoff from the parking areas, then filtrate and clean the stormwater. The planters would also provide some physical separation between vehicles and pedestrians.
- The extensive revegetation of the riverbank was required by federal law.
- The Applicant decided a small secondary restroom facility near the boat ramp would be appropriate and would serve people using the boat ramp as well as those at the overlook.
- He described how the transient dock would move with the river’s water level using pilings.
- The plaza areas were separated from downtown by vegetation running parallel to McLoughlin Blvd as well as a decrease in elevation. Both elements helped provide sound buffering. Expansive views of the river were created from the plaza areas.

- The main water feature was designed to draw people away from McLoughlin Blvd, through the park and down to the Willamette River. The water would be very shallow to safely allow people and children to get in the fountain and interact with the water feature.
 - Columnar basalt and stone would be used for the water feature and would most likely be quarried locally. Sheets of water would fall erratically over the various levels in an effort to breakdown the formality of the city. Integrating a very natural water feature into the formal plaza would provide a very natural feel. Large basalt slabs would be laid on end and etched on the top to channel the water to flow over the top. The fountain would be constructed of all natural materials, unlike the Ira Keller Fountain, which was all concrete.
- He noted 2 water quality facilities that would separate vehicle areas from pedestrian spaces and lawn areas, and also provide additional water quality treatment for stormwater not cleaned in the plaza or parking lot swales.
- The festival lawn was slightly sloped for drainage purposes and would slope from the plaza down to the river. The area would be flat enough for festival booths and tables.
- Klein Point would be the more natural area of the park. Subtle mounding in the open areas would create added separation between McLoughlin Blvd and people in the park.
- The only beach-type area that existed on the riverfront would be cleaned up. Informal access would continue to be provided to the beach to prevent pedestrians from walking through the vegetation. By law, the area would be more heavily vegetated than shown in the slides.
- The intention of having heavier vegetation was to keep the area looking more wild but not overgrown. The Applicant would be working with the Johnson Creek Watershed Council to revegetate the area with native plants and to create a palette of plants that would be appropriate for the riverbank.

Todd Marcum, David Evans & Associates, reviewed various elevations and architectural elements of the proposed restrooms via PowerPoint.

The Applicants responded to comments and questions from DLC members as follows:

- Only the family restrooms would remain open during the winter months to avoid heating the entire facility for freeze protection.
- Discussions about securing the restroom facility and controlling lighting were still taking place. Options were available to install automatic locks in the restrooms, if the facilities needed to be locked down at a certain time. One option would be to leave the family bathrooms open 24 hours, but lock the main bathrooms at a certain time.
- The large festival lawn area provided an opportunity for people to gather to view movies. A screen could be hung temporarily from the side of the restroom facing the festival area. The movies were more of a program element and would provide flexibility to the city.
 - A previous design included a large, white fin wall where movies could be directly projected onto; however, the wall would not block the view to the river when not in use. Instead, the columns on the restroom wall would support a temporary structure for showing movies.
- The cut stone used on the Riverfront Park sign would not be repeated on the concrete of the restroom. The concrete treatment would reflect the simple horizontal nature of the retaining walls, which would all be concrete. This would emphasize the juxtaposition

between the natural basalt columns and the hardscape of the concrete. The detailed stone look only existed near the sign. The goal of the restroom facility's design was to make it simple and clean, and not include details that would draw attention to it, such as a cut stone sign.

- **Mr. Williams** added the desire was not to lose the water feature amongst the basalt. The water feature needed to stand out as a prime spine perpendicular to McLoughlin Blvd that would draw people through the park. Making the basalt water feature a single element in contrast to the concrete structures located on either side would help the water feature stand out and become the prime focal point of the park.
 - The option always existed to introduce texture and color to the expansive, gray, concrete plaza through staining, sandblasting, etc. Scoring was already planned to break up the concrete, which would not be as white as shown. The concrete's color would become more muted over time. The concrete could be stained, but the park's focal point was the Willamette River, which meant keeping other elements very simple and clean to keep people moving west toward the river.
 - The Applicant tried to use a consistent palette of materials and colors throughout the entire project, and the muted tans and grays of the concrete would not compete with the landscaping or the river itself.
- The new restroom facility would provide about 2 times the function of the current restroom located at the park. With the 2 family restrooms being added, the entire structure would be about 3 times larger than the current facility. No code existed to dictate how many fixtures were needed, so the number needed to accommodate the park's needs was a judgment call. The experience of the restroom structure would change as one moved around it because although the building looked much larger from the side, the facility was a long, skinny structure that would look much smaller from the end and become less of a component in the landscape.
- **DLC Member Wisner** asked if an opportunity existed to put any artistic elements on the stark projecting wall panels that would be evocative of Milwaukie's sense of place. **Katie Mangle, Planning Director**, asked why the projecting panels were so high and long.
 - **Mr. Marcum** explained the wall was actually the back of the family restroom and did have a functional purpose. The wall extended past the restroom to help carry the roof and provide a covered seating area. A planter would wrap around the restroom and vegetation could be introduced to break up the height of the building. Different options could be considered to break up the large expanse of cedar wood.
- **Ms. Wisner** asked if there was a way to go from the apex of the wall and slope, or repeat the angle of the roof coming down, to remove the stark, sharp-edged corners from the protruding walls. The 90-degree angles of the wall seemed to be at odds with the slope of the roof and some of the curves along the plaza.
 - **Mr. Marcum** replied those changes could be possible in some areas, but would be impossible in other areas. He reviewed the slopes that could and could not be changed via PowerPoint.
 - He did not want the building to have a residential feel. The restroom facility was not a downtown commercial building, but also not a small shed. He wanted to add elements that would bridge the commercial and residential experiences. One example was how the commercial parapet condition intersected with a sloping roof that extended through on the fourth side. He indicated the component where the

horizontal consistent element was penetrated with the roof coming out to introduce some interest. Options always existed, such as extending the roof out to create an overhang on that edge, instead of stopping the wall at that point.

- The design of the building was a balancing act, but reducing the sharp corners on the intersecting walls was something that could be considered.
- The main power distribution panel for the park was located in the pipe chase between the men's and women's restrooms. Power would be provided to the festival lawn area via outlets along the plaza that vendors could access. The secondary, single-occupant restroom at the top of the boat ramp would also be fed from the main distribution panel. The main restroom facility would be important functionally because it provided power for the entire park.
 - At present, no need existed for 3-phase power; however, power needs would be coordinated with the City to confirm that power coming into the site would be appropriate for any intended uses. Some preliminary identification of loads and needs had been studied. Adjusting for increased power would not require much space and could easily be incorporated into the design.
- The family restroom would be ADA accessible and ADA accessible stalls would also be located inside the multiple occupant restrooms.
- Stormwater from the roof would sheet flow off the edge of the roof onto a gravel area along the backside of the building. No pedestrian access existed there. Gutters and downspouts were added over the restroom entrances to keep water from falling on people using the facilities, so there was no need to cover the entrances with the roof. The entrances were designed based on the functional access to the space on both ends to ensure appropriate portions of the design were covered as needed. Covered entrances were not a driving criterion in dictating the roof's extension. Accommodations were made for any potential runoff with a gutter system. Beyond that, the function of the roof was to enclose the restroom facilities or provide a covered outdoor seating area.
- Installing a gutter system on the backside of the building where movies might be shown had been debated, but no end solution had been decided. A walkway did exist along the west side of the building, but not an entry. Mr. Marcum questioned if introducing a gutter on that side of the building would cause a loss in value and function. Challenges existed with the exposed rafters coming out on that side of the building. The structural members that were extended to create the trellis would prevent a gutter from being placed on the edge of the roof and created more of a challenge on how to address runoff on that side of the building.
 - Runoff from the roof would not deteriorate the concrete, but the coloring would change where the water hit the concrete. Each of the various parapet walls delineated the components of the roof, causing them to operate independently. That roof area would only be about 15 ft by 25 ft, so even in a hard rain, a sheet of water would probably not be coming off the roof, though it would be different than if a gutter was installed.
- **Mr. Marcum** confirmed that the location and design of what was referred to as the sea wall was due to the layout of the 100-year floodplain. **Mr. Williams** added that the final elevation of the restroom structure would be 1 ft above the floodplain, which was the regulatory requirement.

- **Mr. Marcum** displayed picture samples of newly installed cedar siding that would be used on the proposed restroom facility. He explained the cedar would patina over time to become a dull grayish-brown color. The wood columns would be covered with furring strips that could be replaced individually instead of replacing the entire column if graffiti occurred. Anti-graffiti coatings could not be put on the materials because it affected the graying of the cedar. Individual pieces of siding could be replaced as needed, and would patina fairly quickly.
- Introducing stone or sandblasting the base of the concrete on the restroom could be done to soften the concrete's smooth, stark look and create some texture so the concrete better matched the rustic look of the building. Formliners could be used to introduce a little irregularity to the concrete. Anything was an option at this point in the project. However, balancing the desire to keep the building simple, but not synonymous with stark and cold was important. Introducing color could go a long way in addressing those concerns. Scoring or reveals could also be introduced to provide some interest.
 - **Ms. Wisner** advised that the DLC had concerns about stark concrete in Milwaukie due to some regrets on how stark concrete looked on past projects. The DLC was always interested in seeing options that would enhance concrete surfaces and break up how stark and plain the concrete was in the project.
 - **Mr. Williams** explained that sacking the fresh concrete would help with the shine, but other finishes existed to make the concrete appear matte and muted so it would not stand out as much. Having the plaza and restroom facility near each other would present an area with a lot of concrete, and providing color on either the building concrete or on the surface of the plaza would help lessen the intensity of so much concrete in one area. All the concrete surfaces presented in the project would have a sandblasted finish to take the shine off.
- The restroom's roof would not be a flat, single-ply or membrane roof, but a standing-seam metal roof that had a low slope so water would drain off. No tar would be used. Metal parapet caps would exist at the top of the flat walls. The top and sides of the roof where it met the wall would have flashing that turned up underneath the siding.
- No skylights existed on the restroom facility. Minimizing all penetrations in the roof would reduce maintenance requirements. Not having mechanical equipment or other things on the roof would also improve the visual impact of the building.
- **Mr. Williams** noted that the picture depicting trees in large cement containers near the top of the stairway entering the secondary plaza was a misrepresentation. The planters would follow the slope of the stairs at curb height. The planters were introduced as a transitional element to the very broad stairway in the secondary plaza across from Monroe St, rather than spilling directly into the amphitheater.
- Channels covered by manufactured grates were designed to run across the plaza, transferring water from one area of the plaza to another. The channel underneath would be lined with cobbles so one could hear water as it flowed, giving people some sense of the water being under their feet. The grates come in widths of 18 in and 24 in, which the Applicant was considering; but scale-wise, they might be reduced to the 18-in width.
- Curving the railing would be contrary to the concept of the perpendicular line pulling people directly into the park from McLoughlin Blvd. The rails were not meant to be prime elements and were manufactured as rectangular, so getting them curvilinear would be a custom product.

- The small squares depicted on the larger overall design were actually flat stone placed within the grass. The stones represented a transition from the concrete to the grass and would include a mix of concrete and basalt.
- A Giant Dogwood tree was the signature tree for the park and would be placed adjacent to the fountain. Other smaller dogwood varieties would be placed throughout other areas of the park.
 - **Chair Ives** cautioned that the Eddie's White Wonder dogwood tree variety was a *florida nuttallii* cross, making it highly susceptible to anthracnose. She asked that a *kousa* variety of dogwood be used instead. Many of the Eddie's White Wonder trees had died out.
 - **Mr. Williams** was not certain that a *kousa* dogwood variety would get big enough, but he would explore other options.
- Only one vehicular access was provided. The primary goal of the project was to reclaim as much of the small space as possible for pedestrians. The secondary goal was to provide a main entrance for the park and boat ramp, which was desired by the community. No other place existed to introduce a vehicular entrance into the park in order to get the boat ramp to fit with the sloping topography. Utilizing the existing Washington St intersection would have put the boat ramp in the middle of the park, and the grade change was too significant to put the vehicular entrance anywhere else. The park's design was bound by both program and topography.
 - The boat ramp width, parking, turnarounds, and the loading dock were all based on Oregon Marine Board standards. The turnaround area was designed with AutoTURN software to ensure it could accommodate large boats.
- The amphitheater could accommodate a fairly significant stage. The 12-ft wide sidewalk was primarily designed for maintenance and would accommodate an 8,000 Gross Vehicle Weight vehicle. The sidewalk could also be used for performers to get equipment to and from the amphitheater. Electricity in the amphitheater would be accessible via secured, at-grade vaults.
- Though the play area was only 60 ft from McLoughlin Blvd, the area was bermed and direct access existed to the bathroom. The Applicant had considered locating the play area on the other side of the amphitheater, but that area was smaller due to the water quality facility and could not accommodate any sort of play equipment. Having the play area on that side also did not fit flow-wise.

Chair Ives stated that the Juncus plant could be invasive and wished the plant could be taken off the planting list. Even if contained in concrete planters, Juncus was self-seeding and the seeds would blow everywhere. She suggested Iris plants.

Ms. Wisner said she was happy to see basalt used in the water feature, but questioned how deeply Milwaukie's background with regard to water was explored when designing the water feature; namely all the flowing water in the city, the characteristics of that water, and the different ways it occurred and flowed through Milwaukie. She was curious what led to the proposed water feature.

- **Mr. Williams** replied he was aware of some exposed creeks in the area and the nature of those creeks, but the concept of the creeks and other natural water features in Milwaukie did not come into the design considerably. The idea of the water feature was to provide a more natural element into a non-natural plaza, so the consideration was more about the use of materials and water than thinking about how water flowed through the city. He

noted that a piped creek that flowed under the park was in line with where the water feature would be placed.

Chair Ives called for public testimony.

David Green, Chair, Riverfront Board, stated that the water connectivity piece had been a theme throughout the entire time he had been on the Riverfront Board (Board). That concept included connectivity with all the waterways in Milwaukie, and focused on Kellogg Creek, Johnson Creek, and the springs coming out of the hillside above the Waldorf School as important natural areas that would define Riverfront Park. The Board had looked into feeding the park's water features with water from the area's natural water sources, but doing so would have been very expensive. He felt carrying the water feature through the center of the park was an attempt to pick up on how important water, and the connection to it, was to Riverfront Park.

On behalf of the Board, he thanked JoAnn Herrigel for her patience and willingness to work with such a diverse group of Board members representing many different interests. He believed the Board had done a good job representing the city of Milwaukie. Though the Board did not always agree, the Board had reached some consensus. He also thanked Gil Williams for representing the Board's diverse interests and fitting what he could into the very small space. The Riverfront Park design reflected a lot of the input and changes suggested by Board members over the years. Even in the last few weeks, the siding for the restroom had changed and evolved.

He noted the project was only at 70% design, but assured the Board was committed to stay involved with the project as the details of the design were refined. The Board met regularly each month and lately the focus had been not only on the design, but also on the permitting process which drove many of the design features as well.

He urged the DLC to make a strong recommendation to the Planning Commission to move the design and permitting processes forward, adding any comments the DLC had on the project because room still existed to incorporate that input into the design details. The Board wanted to see the project's momentum continue.

Ms. Herrigel confirmed work had started on the park. The waterline was being relocated to reconfigure the site for the park's design.

Vice Chair Bernard asked if the Board had requested that the restroom facility be designed as stark and low as possible.

Mr. Green replied the Board did not tell the designers exactly what to do, but had wanted to maintain the views from as many places in the park as possible. Removing the buildings along McLoughlin Blvd opened up an incredible expanse of multi-million dollar views of the river for the city. To maintain those views from McLoughlin Blvd and within the plaza areas, the Board asked that the restroom have a low profile and that its visual impact be minimized.

Ben Horner-Johnson, Lake Road Neighborhood District Association (NDA), confirmed that the metal grates placed in the walkways over the water channels were ADA approved and made specifically for sidewalks and walkways so they would pose no wheel hazard. He noted two examples for people to see: the grass amphitheater at Mount Tabor and the large amount of basalt and numerous water features at Esther Shore Park in Vancouver.

Many of the nice, old-style lights being used had bases that blocked light from going down and sent a lot of light skyward. He preferred to have the light coming down.

He confirmed that the same Hwy 99E bridge would remain over Kellogg Creek and a new, pedestrian-only bridge would be added where the existing fish ladder started under the old bridge.

He clarified several items with the Applicant as follows:

- Solar panels on the west facing roof of the restroom facility would be eye-catching, but not necessarily a bad option because it would be a sustainable approach to generate power. However, the amount of power generated did not pencil out to cover the expense.
- At present, the building was freeze-protected only with heat tracing wire on the pipes and forced air electric unit heaters. No heat pump would be used for cooling since it was a small building.
- Water runoff from the smaller roofs of the restroom would be directed via downspouts to planters near roof components with gutters. The runoff from the larger roof on the McLoughlin Blvd side would go into the planter. Typically, a trenched, gravel catch area would be installed to avoid degrading the dirt and the collected water would infiltrate into the planter. Catch basins were limited on the site, so water from most of the flat areas would flow into planters and into the soil.
- The water source for the water feature would be recirculating, non-potable water.

He concluded that he and his wife had responded to the survey, but they had not heard much about the survey since. He believed the Applicant had done a good job and many of his concerns had been addressed. He hoped the application would go forward.

Gary Klein, Vice Chair, Riverfront Board, thanked JoAnn Herrigel for being so helpful. He stated that David Green, Michael Martin, and Mitch Wall were all original members of the Board and had really stuck with the project and done a good job. Mr. Williams was with another company when he began working with the Board on Riverfront Park prior to 2001 and had brought in David Evans & Associates when he changed companies. He appreciated that Mr. Williams had stuck with the project and had made everything work. He hoped the DLC would vote to approve the application and pass it on to the Planning Commission.

Chair Ives closed public testimony.

The DLC took a brief recess at 9:15 p.m. and reconvened at 9:23 p.m.

Mr. Hemer stated one major concern was that vegetation used to block the building and noise from the street would also block the view of the river from downtown. Perhaps dwarf trees or shorter vegetation could be used to conceal the building from the street to avoid blocking the river's view.

- Regarding the restroom building materials, he preferred using a fake stone to complement the other stone features, and cement fiber siding, like Nichiha and Hardiplank. After 2 years, the cedar siding might not be taken care of due to budget restraints, especially since the cedar would be attached to CMU walls. Cement fiber sidings could be painted in tri-toned, stained colors to provide a natural look with a 25-year warranty on the paint.
- Small dome skylights provided a lot of light, so electric lights would not be needed during the day. He wanted the facility to generate its own electricity if possible.
- A twin or triple wall type of polycarbonate could be used instead of a metal awning. The awning could be a smoke color to provide shade, but would leave the area open and translucent to the pedestrians underneath.

- Though uncertain how much water the roofs would actually collect, he was concerned about the water flow off the roofs. He inquired if any drywells had been proposed onsite to ensure the water did not create a mushy field after a rainy day. He asked about installing rain drains underground to direct the flow of water into the sewer level since the site was being torn up anyway.
- He was concerned about the maintenance involved with keeping the gutters clear of leaves from the deciduous trees and of items people might throw on the roof.
- Overall, he really liked the park's design. The site was well thought out, and the park would feature some real natural beauty. The Applicant had done a great job.

Chair Ives assumed the gravel catch area would be 18 in to 2 ft wide and that the gravel would be at least 18 in deep. She was still concerned about the concrete on the west side of the building, but was unsure what options were available to keep rain from sheeting down, even though it would not be very much. She believed people might run under the arbor portion and that the concrete could become slippery since it was on the shady side of the building

Mr. Hemer explained that because the area was sloped, the water would flow toward the river along the path of least resistance, which would be the walkway. The wall of the restroom and the retaining wall would capture and cause the water to gather against the edge of the walkway. If gutters were going to be installed, rain drains could be run underground to the sewer pipe.

Vice Chair Bernard loved the proposed design. She was impressed how the Applicant was able to work with all of the agencies involved. She recalled filling out the questionnaire and wished the park could have less parking, but understood that requirements had to be met. She liked that the rest of the park was made for pedestrians and had everything the community requested.

Though the Applicant tried to make the restroom facility as unobtrusive as possible, she believed the building would be a main focus or gateway because everyone would walk by and see it. People would use it as shelter from the rain, and the movies would be projected onto it. As such an important feature, she did not believe the facility met the Milwaukie Character guideline because:

- The building did not convey a sense of place.
- The facility only integrated to the environment because the building was placed in the middle of a lot of concrete and was made of more concrete and with some wood sticking up.
- The guideline called for establishing strength in gateways, and the building would be a gateway.
- Architectural contrast could be used wisely and art could be integrated to convey something of Milwaukie into the design. Art could be placed on the walls or a design could be imprinted into the concrete, such as waves or a stamped picture of the Lot Whitcomb sidewheeler steamship.

According to Figure 9 in Appendix B of the application, though the restroom was at a lower elevation, it would still be seen. Based on where the trees were depicted, the river could be seen from the berm at the playground near the amphitheater and through the plaza. Otherwise, the top of the restroom and the trees would be seen because the view of the river would be blocked. Therefore it was important that the restroom building reflected Milwaukie.

Ms. Wisner commended and credited the Applicant for doing a tough assignment and including all the key elements in the design. She had a couple of serious concerns, but overall believed the design was successful, well done, and created a park that Milwaukie could look forward to.

As a graphic designer, artist, and educator, she understood how specific criteria influenced and impacted design, but also allowed the opportunity for creative solutions within those specific parameters. She wanted to give the design team something more to consider.

Her main concerns regarded the design of the water feature and the restroom building, but namely the water feature. As a member of the DLC, she felt honor-bound to follow and judge everything based on the Design Guidelines. She read the following paragraphs from “The History of Milwaukie, Oregon” issued by the Milwaukie Historical Society in 1965:

“The name Milwaukie derives from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Thus, it is necessary to trace its place-name through the origins of that Midwest city. Milwaukee is located on a bay on the west shore of Lake Michigan where three rivers--the Milwaukie, the Menomonee, and the Kinnickinnic--converge. The land nearby was inhabited by Indians of the Pottawattamie tribe, among others, and it is from this group’s vernacular that the name has come. Indian designations follow realistic descriptions of physical features, so Milwaukie’s name started to grow from a word signifying ‘meeting place of waters.’

Lot Whitcomb’s admiration for the booming Wisconsin city, standing at the ‘meeting place of waters,’ drove him to search for a dream location worthy of his ideal. The tiny settlement on the banks of the Willamette seemed an answer to his yearnings and a promise to his aspirations. Here within a short distance there entered the Willamette a number of streams--Kellogg Creek, Johnson Creek, and many smaller branches fed by the multiplicity of springs in the vicinity. The platted town-site became Milwaukee ‘meeting place of waters.’ Justification of his choice came in the launching of the ‘Lot Whitcomb’ and in the subsequent operations from this river port. Lot Whitcomb’s city appeared on the way to becoming the boom city of the Oregon country. But, alas, the dream was not to be realized and Destiny cast the town in a lesser role.”

She explained that she cited the document because every time a project came up she believed it was a golden opportunity to say something about Milwaukie, and the Riverfront Park project needed to say something specific about Milwaukie. The DLC was charged with looking at the plans and scrutinize that aspect to ensure the design conveyed Milwaukie’s sense of place.

Milwaukie had natural springs, creeks, and a river flowing from east to west. Ponds and places where water cut streambeds and caused floods also existed. Milwaukie residents often had to interact with water because water flowed throughout Milwaukie, sometimes out of control in a wild way, and other times very gently. The springs meander through the city and bubble up in peoples’ yards and in historic ponds. They flow underneath Washington St over to the junior high school and bubble up again through a waterfall and then back under someone’s home. Flowing waters were Milwaukie’s story, and she was excited to see what a top design team could do with that information. She did not feel that the life and history of the town was ever really discussed in relation to the proposed project.

- The water feature was attractive, but it had not reached its full expressive potential for being Milwaukie’s main contemporary water feature in such a prominent place as the Riverfront Park. She wanted the Applicant to develop alternate designs as a condition of approval that showed water bubbling up, pooling, charging, meandering, and flowing in many places throughout the town in that same space on the plaza. Rather than a straight,

rigidly confined water feature, she wanted a water feature characteristic of Milwaukie with a contemporary flavor to fit within the plaza.

- The water feature should leave a legacy for Milwaukie's future residents. As people walked through the park, the water feature's unique design should prompt people to ask questions about the story behind its design. The water feature should express how water had historically always been in Milwaukie; how water defined Milwaukie's name; and how water had always impacted Milwaukie residents. She agreed the water feature should draw people to the waterfront, but the straight, downward course of the water feature did not describe the story of Milwaukie.

She liked the direction toward natural materials for the restroom, but was struggling with the smooth concrete base, as well as with the section between the restroom, water feature, and stairs. All the sharp corners and right angles in the design produced a feeling of created visual tension.

- The park had nice, curving lines and she wondered about the departure to rigid rectangles, water pools, planters, and stones. The park should be designed to facilitate the need for people to relax, recreate, and get away from the stress and rigidity of urban life.
- The restroom facility and surrounding concrete areas should be softened. The straight planes of the building wall panels portrayed a sense of barriers that interrupted the view of the river too much. The imposed rigid design elements conflicted with the flow and curve of the waterfront, pathways, and amphitheater. A warmer, friendlier design was needed for people to warm up to a bit more.

Chair Ives suggested moving the bathroom around the curve to the north, putting it closer to the amphitheater and playground, and opening up the plaza on the south side a bit more. The change might help separate the squareness of the stairs and bathroom. She also suggested using 2 to 3 pumping stations to create a couple waterfalls as part of the water feature. Though separate, the areas would visually look connected.

Ms. Wisner asked if some grass could be included near the water feature so kids and parents could have an area to sit near the water. Having grass or plantings near part of the water feature would soften the concrete look of the design and make the water feature more inviting.

Chair Ives replied that lawn may not be possible due to the extra maintenance required, but believed planting pockets or ornamental grasses could be incorporated.

Mr. Hemer stated that he liked the base of the water feature because it would create a falling, cascade type of waterfall. He asked if Ms. Wisner wanted the water feature to have a more curved design to give a river kind of feel and so that it would not fall fast down the hill.

Ms. Wisner described her general vision of the water feature. Near the water feature's starting point she would like to see multiple sources of water coming up; one could be bubbling, one could be flowing, etc., and then meandering water channels could finger out into the concrete. The water could then cascade down into a secondary level. The design should not be so rigidly rectangular, but enable water to spill out as water did naturally. Water erodes river banks, so the water could look like it was eroding the stairs and the shape would splay out and continue in a curvilinear channeling water down to the third cascade, where it would do different things again with more of a spilling out, meandering type of shape. The water could then fall into organically-shaped pools, similar to a river's edge.

The stepping stones could be a combination of the rectangles in the stairway that become more rounded and irregularly shaped, so devolution could be seen from rectangles to more organic shapes.

She wanted planned irregularity. She liked how the bottom 2 steps in the design were different from each other and not regimented, and she wanted to see more of that type of irregularity throughout the design. She would also like to see more water-carved rock throughout to make the water feature look less monolithic and rectangular and more naturally shaped.

Chair Ives commented that stones being picked for the project already had a worn look to them. She suggested some bubbling fountains could be placed in the lower pond as well, and noted that if the restroom was moved over, the trees could also move to open up a larger view corridor.

Ms. Mangle noted she was not hearing any show stopper comments, only challenges about what should be changed for the final design. She suggested crafting a new finding that encouraged the Applicant to consider certain items when preparing for the post-approval review. The Applicant had to return to the DLC for the water feature and restroom anyway. She suggested taking a break so she and Mr. Marquardt could make a list of 5 or 6 items that the DLC wanted the Applicant to address.

The Committee took a brief recess and reconvened at 10:06 p.m.

Ms. Mangle stated staff was proposing changes to both the conditions of approval and the findings. On Addendum 1 dated November 9, 2009, staff proposed renumbering Finding 9 at the bottom of page 11 to Finding 10 and creating a new Finding 9 to state:

“As the Applicant prepares the project for the project’s conditioned post-approval review to comply with Condition 4, the Design Landmarks Committee has asked the Applicant to consider how the following aspects of the design can better meet the Milwaukie character Design Guidelines. The items to consider are: water flow from the roof of the buildings; design the water feature to echo the meandering nature of water through the site and incorporate less linear features; consider ways to incorporate Milwaukie’s character in the details of the building; reduce the size and angular nature of the parapet walls; proximity of the bathroom and the playground; and consider views from downtown.”

Ms. Wisner clarified that the desired changes to the water feature were more about considering how water flowed through Milwaukie and the park site. She wanted a design concept that reflected how Milwaukie’s character was affected by the water that flowed through the city via springs, creeks, and rivers; the nature of the water and how the town related to it.

Chair Ives suggested changing the wording to have the Applicant address how the water that flowed from the roof would be handled.

Mr. Marcum requested clarification about how to incorporate Milwaukie’s character in the details of the building.

Vice Chair Bernard replied a scene from Milwaukie’s past could be imprinted into the cement, or new and old artwork could be incorporated into the building. The Applicant could view some existing murals throughout the city to get a better idea of Milwaukie’s character. The artwork did not have to be a literal interpretation of Milwaukie’s character.

Mr. Williams asked if the DLC preferred a particular architectural style that already existed in Milwaukie and could be incorporated into the restroom facility to resemble the rest of the city.

Comments from the DLC included:

- The DLC liked Craftsman styles and bungalows. The DLC did not like the flat concrete unfinished look. Flat concrete might be what other cities have, but it would not happen in Milwaukie anymore. Though many 1950s structures existed in Milwaukie, not many all-concrete buildings existed in the city.
- Nothing was wrong with using actual pictures or artwork to incorporate the past into the restroom facility. There were many ways for an artist to interpret the story of Milwaukie. The 1996 Riverfront Planning Committee had talked about having something visual and artistic along Milwaukie's walkways that told the historic timeline of the city. Perhaps something similar could be incorporated at Riverfront Park so Milwaukie residents could have a connection to Milwaukie's past.

Ms. Wisner said she was not wild about the building's shape, but seeing more natural materials used on the building helped. She preferred warm, inviting architecture, like Cascadian architecture. She also liked board and batten, river rock, and other natural, touchable and welcoming types of rustic architecture and materials.

Chair Ives agreed such statements were fair to present to the Applicant, but discussion about artwork was not really in the Applicant's realm. The DLC could place artwork on a wall of the building.

Mr. Hemer clarified the DLC wanted something to cover up the concrete base and a design to be integrated about the story of Milwaukie on the large, flat wall of the facility. He noted that he did have an opinion about the cedar siding. He assumed interpretive signs would be placed in the area to relate Milwaukie's story, but did not favor putting characters on buildings, for example.

Mr. Marquardt explained that specific items did not necessarily need to be captured directly into the wording of the findings because the Applicant needed some room to demonstrate basic compliance with how the design was modified to be more compliant with Milwaukie's character. The Applicant needed to think about how to incorporate the DLC's suggestions, but not be dictated by a list.

Ms. Herrigel stated it was helpful that the DLC reviewed the modifications for covering the cement base and found the cedar siding acceptable.

Vice Chair Bernard said she did not love the cedar siding, but if the Board was okay with the siding, then she was too.

Mr. Klein replied the Board was happy with the cedar siding and since the bathroom would be 1 ft above the flood plain, a concrete base was a great idea.

Ms. Wisner clarified the concrete base was not being disputed, only the concrete's finish.

Ms. Mangle added "Reduce the cold feeling of concrete throughout the site and on the building" to the new Finding 9.

Chair Ives clarified the concern was basically about the concrete on the building; the concrete walks were acceptable.

Ms. Mangle amended the character portion of new Finding 9 to state, "Consider ways to incorporate Milwaukie's character and history in the details of the project. This could include incorporation of art elements, vernacular architecture, signage, or a choice of materials."

Mr. Marcum questioned the third item where a solution was being dictated, instead of recommending a guideline of lowering and changing the design of the parapet walls. He asked

if the DLC wanted to leave that open for some interpretation, and what result did the DLC desire.

Chair Ives agreed the item could be removed since the Applicant would be returning with an entire package and the DLC should not dictate specific details of an overall design.

Mr. Marquardt explained that pursuant to the new finding, another sentence would be added to the end of Condition 2 in Attachment 2 page 1 that would state, "Submit a narrative explaining how the plans have addressed the items listed in Finding 9." This would direct the Applicant to address the issues at the post-approval stage. A narrative would dictate a written explanation, but the project would also return before the DLC for post-approval review.

Ms. Mangle added the DLC would be reviewing the plans, but in addition, staff was asking the Applicant to explain how those plans addressed the concerns listed in Finding 9.

She noted that the list in Condition 4 of Attachment 2 also needed to be amended. Some items that the DLC would look at again had been struck, including the restroom buildings. Given the current conversation, staff recommended putting it back on the list so the DLC would review it again.

Mr. Hemer moved that the DLC recommend that the Planning Commission approve application DR-09-01 with the recommended findings and conditions of approval as amended found in Attachments 1 and 2. Vice Chair Bernard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Jackson Street Bus Shelter project update

Ms. Mangle stated she had prepared a draft of a letter of support that she hoped the DLC could submit. TriMet was about to enter into a contract with the bus shelter manufacturer, based on the DLC's recommendation, and TriMet requested a letter of support from the DLC.

The project was going well and most things the DLC asked for had been confirmed. The final designs would be done in concert with the manufacturer, such as the final shape and structure of the roof, the final colors, and the material to be used at the bottom of the structure. These items could not be determined until TriMet entered into a contract with the manufacturer to purchase the shelters. She read the letter for the DLC's consideration.

Mr. Hemer moved to approve the letter of support for TriMet. Vice Chair Bernard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

7. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 p.m.



Becky Ives, Chair