

Mt. Tabor GNA Advisory Group
Meeting # 6 Summary
Western Seminary - Chapel Basement
April 6, 2005

Committee Members Present: Chuck Arnst, Ron Bates, Sharie Dietz, Gay Greger, Terre Haberland, Ron Hall, Paul Leistner, Shannon Loch, Teresa Miller, Sharie Moss, Mary Mowery, Sue Parish, Gina Patriarca, and Michael Schnidal.

Unable to attend: Kathy Kuehn
Resource Attendees: Don McTaggart
Committee Staff: Diane Redd
Facilitator: Elaine Cogan

The meeting was called to order by Elaine Cogan. She reviewed the evening's agenda. There were no corrections to the previous meeting summary.

Overview of Last Meeting:

Diane Redd reviewed what the committee has covered over the past five meetings. At the last meeting, the committee voted to expand the area to the west, incorporating the trail but staying east of the treeline. On the east side the committee voted to put the fence just west of the treeline to encourage people to gather farther into the area. An extended discussion took place regarding lighting, but the committee decided it was too expensive an investment to include in the first phase. Some discussion took place about the Stewardship Group idea and the committee recommended placement of signage and gate.

Elaine asked the committee to discuss the decisions up to date. Gina Patriarca clarified that lighting will be needed, but is not a necessity during summer time.

Mary Mowery brought up her concern with the decision to reverse an earlier decision to move the eastern boundary 100' to the west. Having missed the previous meeting, she was surprised to learn that there had been a decision to keep the boundary virtually where it is at present. She said that because people gather right near the entrance to the area, this will mean that neighbors will continue to be impacted by the noise - especially in the summertime. She also said that visually, it does not look nice. Mowery felt that the committee had agreed to a significant buffer for west side neighbors and should do the same for the east side neighbors.

Mike Foster & Chuck Arnst felt that the problem with the east side is that people are congregating in the northeast section because of the light. Mrs. Arnst pointed out privacy has become an issue for the neighbors since the

brush cutting and tree pruning took place on the east side of the OLA,
The committee asked if they could revisit the east side boundary line.

Boundary Discussion - East

Paul Liestner and Mary Mowery said that they walked the area. One neighbor's house only has a 35 ft buffer between the OLA and house. There were concerns about OLA users congregating on the west side of the park. Chuck Arnst suggested moving the pathway in order to manage where people enter the OLA and where they congregate.

Terre said that a good thing about the east side is that light comes from Warner Pacific and near the pathway off Harrison, making it more attractive at night. She felt that it is necessary to push the east side boundary back. Chuck Arnst did not agree with the issue of the light because people are congregating there all day, no matter the time.

Mary Mowery said that ever since the area has been cleaned up from brush, there is a lot more sunlight for the OLA users. Ron Bates said he had originally suggested moving the boundaries on the east side back 200 ft instead of 100 ft., but felt 100 ft would be a reasonable amount. Chuck Arnst said that the committee's solution needed to discourage congregating that is currently happening in the top right corner of the OLA.

Gay Greger said that at the last meeting there were questions regarding the possibility of relocating the trail. She pointed out a new potential option on a map, explaining that may be possible to relocate the primary entrance trail, although it will require some careful work to do so through such a dense tree canopy. She also posed the question whether to decommission the current trail all together.

Sue Parish noted that when it snows, the slope from Harrison down into the meadow area is very popular for sledding. Putting a new trail parallel to Harrison could curtail this activity. Others suggested kids could take off from the trail instead of the road.

Terre Haberland suggested the committee just make a general suggestion to move the boundary in 100 ft.

Gina Patriarca strongly objected to the reduction in space and hours and believes that moving the entrance back 100' is not warranted. She told the group that she had recorded no violations during the times she spent observing and video taping the east meadow area in the early morning hours.

Dave Hillman - Chair of the Friends of Mt. Tabor Park & Mt. Tabor Foot

Patrol, said that the Foot Patrol has spent 4 years walking the area. picking up litter, etc. He had never walked the OLA area as a dog owner until recently. Now he has walked it 60 times. He offered three suggestions. 1) Regarding lighting, he suggested thinking about putting it in on upper right area of OLA; 2) this park now has historical designation, and this must be taken into consideration; 3) access for elderly - the OLA does not now have a good access point for elders. Think about terrain and angles that will work for handicapped and elderly persons. Even some dogs can hardly make it right now. He added that in the 60 times he has walked the area, he has never once seen any dog running loose near east side neighbors. He also has only seen a person enter from the east side neighborhood once. He acknowledged that this was simply his experience - he doesn't claim to know what goes on all the time.

Sharie Dietz suggested using a switchback design for the new entrance trail. Gay responded that staff had considered that, but due to the slopes involved, the switchback would bring people right back into the area we're trying to avoid. She said that a trail alignment that followed the grade at a diagonal through the trees would be the most direct way to move people into the area. She noted that the actual alignment will very likely not be a straight line however.

Paul Leistner said that pushing the OLA back further into the trees would provide more of a sound buffer for the east side neighbors. He added that they should recommend the boundary work with the terrain of the park.

Hal Mallory walked the OLA today and from his front yard, he measured 147 feet to the current boundary. He has found that the noise carries down into east side neighbor's properties. He felt that buffering for noise should be fair for both east and west side neighbors.

There was a motion to adjust the eastside boundary 100 ft. to the west. 10 people voted in favor of the motion, 3 voted against. Gay Greger did not vote, feeling that PP&R will support whatever the community decides.

David Crawford - asked if bicycles and joggers use area, what is going to keep dogs from chasing them? How will this affect the general public's use of the site? Cogan answered that this is an enforcement issue.

Gay suggested the committee should discuss rules related to use of area by general public.

West Side Boundary Discussion:

Shannon Loch said that the north and west gates are pretty close together. She suggested creating an access that does not go right into the flat area. Paul Leistner suggested that since so many people are accessing the OLA

from this side, the gate locations need to be selected with the users in mind. He suggested asking the OLA users where they feel the gate should be placed.

Elaine Cogan reminded the committee that anything that is put in for the OLA at Mt. Tabor Park is for a trial basis. Terre Haberland said that just as the east side neighbors are worried about the noise, so are the west side neighbors. Dog owners need to understand that the boundaries don't really end at the park. Gina Patriarca stated that OLA users don't have to stand by houses and talk, but with no lighting in the OLA itself, they feel they have no choice. She also asked for clarification regarding the concrete pad - is it in or out of the expanded area on the west. Ron Hall pointed out the proposed westside boundaries, explaining that over half the concrete pad is inside the area.

Elaine Cogan asked how much further the committee would like to go in designing this OLA. She was not sure that any more conversation over time is going to design this any better. Michael Schnidal said that the Mt. Tabor N.A. should be able to make recommendations based on what we have talked about in the meetings.

Nancy Norby spoke up from the audience to say that as a user, she supported an entrance on the concrete pad vs. dirt or wood chips. She said that there are problems at other OLAs with surfacing material building up against the gate.

Shannon Loch reiterated that she has a high level of concern about people congregating near the gate/pad area. Terre Haberland is concerned about where people will end up parking.

Gay said she thought that most of what is being discussed for the west end is reflected on the new map posted on the wall. It includes realigning the lower trail to allow for the loop inside the boundary. She asked that westside neighbors look at the map closely before they leave and get back to her with any questions or concerns.

Budget Discussion:

Gay distributed a budget information sheet to the committee and briefly reviewed each item, pointing out options for various amenities that had been discussed. The recommended option for lighting was to consider poles with timed lights that would correspond to the OLA hours. While lights could be provided by PGE would be significantly less expensive, they would stay on all night and this would not be appropriate - especially in the center area near the dorms. Ron Bates speaking for Warner Pacific College agreed.

The fencing and gates being proposed would be about \$12, 655.

Elaine said that there really should not be questions about the figures, but rather about what amenities they would like to see in the OLA. Paul Leistner asked to be reminded of what the committee has to work with. Gay said the target amount is \$40,000, explaining that this isn't money specifically budgeted but is the amount PP&R feels it can commit without requesting additional funds from City Council. If priority improvements can be made with this money, they could be augmented by fundraising, future budgeted improvements, etc.

The amenities Gay felt might be good to start with were: fencing, new entrance trail on the east, realignment of trail on the west, a bench, water and kiosk. The costs of the suggested amenities come out to be just under \$40,000. Elaine Cogan thanked Gay for spending the time needed to put together the budget proposal.

Discussion turned to fencing and gates. Shannon Loch felt that if there would be an entry on the west side, it should be in the park. Nancy Norby reiterated that the traditional entrance is via the concrete pad.

Sharie Dietz reminded the committee that when they first started meeting, there was discussion of putting up field fencing. Gay responded that the numbers reflect field fencing, not chain link.

Nancy Norby suggested the fencing should be repaired on the south side along the Warner Pacific property line, or else there may be problems with dogs running down and into the school. Gay said the budgeted amount includes repairing the area of concern, but does not include new fencing for the entire south side.

Mike Foster suggested going without a fence line at the north side. Gay replied that there is no discussion about fencing the north end of the OLA because it is so steep.

Shannon Loch thought they discussed starting with something simpler than a kiosk to place information. Gina Patriarca said that something similar to a realtor box would work just fine.

Gay said that the signs in the area would be temporary, so it would be possible to attach a couple different styles of Plexiglas boxes/protectors to the back of the sign and see how it works.

The committee agreed to try the temporary kiosk solution for now, and take the kiosk off the priority list - providing a little contingency fund in the event other higher priority items were more expensive than anticipated.

With that exception, all members were in favor of Gay's proposal for priority improvements.

Regarding signs, Gina suggested that they be friendly and firm - making it so people feel invited to the area. She added that PP&R could also use friendly reminder signs to keep dogs on leash in other areas. Shannon Loch asked that the committee take a look at how many signs are already in the park and weigh the needs of new ones to be placed.

Sharie Moss asked if the signs are in the budget. She suggested using the nice wooden ones. Terre suggested in the future raising money for a sign once they know what the needs were.

William Parish had an idea to have the fines listed at the top of signs in larger font, and then have the rules below. Gina Patriarca felt that this idea is antagonistic and against the charge of the committee.

Sharie Moss felt that directional signage is needed so people park in the right area.

Gay explained that permanent site signs and the directional signs being discussed are PP&R's responsibility at all off-leash sites and do not need to be part of this budget specifically. She said PP&R shares concerns voiced earlier about cluttering up the parks with all sorts of signs, so they want to be thoughtful in sign design and placement. She will send draft wording for directional and other signs that have been discussed out to the committee for their comment.

Elaine Cogan asked whether the committee wanted to make a parking recommendation. Shannon Loch suggested designating more areas for parking within the park in general and around the OLA.

Don McTaggart, PP&R Park District Supervisor, said that according to City Code, you can be ticketed if you are not parked in a designated parking area. He added that this is primarily focused on ensuring emergency vehicle access. There are a number of cars using Harrison/Lincoln for through traffic. He would be careful about designating parking along the Harrison. Gay noted that a goal of the Mt. Tabor Master Plan was to formalize parking where that was possible - resulting in the addition of pull out areas like the one on the east end of the park. Officially designating parking areas is not a simple matter. The area would need to meet certain criteria, would have to be improved to meet building requirements, and the project would have to go through a conditional use permit process. The conditional use process alone would take five months or more and cost about ten thousand more dollars. Cost to make the actual physical improvements would be considerable.

Shannon Loch thought that this conversation needs to be revisited as we watch how heavily the OLA is used.

Committee agreed that the Good Neighbor Agreement should acknowledge that parking is an issue. Shannon Loch also added that the recommendation needs to state that no designated parking has been allotted for the OLA to date..

Gina does not feel that there will be a huge change in use and added that this needs to be monitored before making any recommendations for parking. There is an issue regarding parking in general for all activities in Mt. Tabor Park, not just for off-leash use.

Enforcement/Stewardship Program:

Elaine asked the committee to look over the rules generated by the City-wide Off-Leash Advisory Committee. Shannon Loch reminded the committee about the suggestion from the last meeting to add "please respect the neighbors by playing quietly in early morning and evening hours." Terre added that there should be some friendly language about working together to make the site work (neighbors and OLA users).

Dave Hillman suggested adding "pick up and dispose waste in the proper receptacles" to the rules.

David Crawford suggested adding scoop bag dispensers.

There was another suggestion about considering the addition of "doggy doolies." But the group acknowledged that these particular amenities are really made for individual owners to use in their own backyard. Gay told the committee that PP&R is looking into the trial of a porta pottie for dog waste. That way, the waste would be treated rather than end up in a landfill.

Michael Kinney said that C-SPOT is willing to assist in developing a stewardship program.

Sharie Dietz asked the committee to discuss how C-SPOT will work. Elaine moved that Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association make these recommendations. Terre asked if the stewardship group could be put together and ready to go before the new plans are implemented.

Dave Hillman explained that a foot patrol is non-confrontational. Duties of the foot patrol group are to observe, record, & report. When they see people who have their dog on leash in the park, they thank people for following the rules. Likewise, they remind offenders nicely about the leash law. There is little authority, although when people see them walking up in

their vests, they usually leash their dogs. Hillman suggested having a specific group for the OLA. He would be glad to provide the Mt. Tabor Foot Patrol if he could get about 20 more people to sign up. Friends of Mt. Tabor Park is a broader group. Hillman would be happy to take any recommendations for help to this group as well.

Michael Kinney would like to involve the off-leash users with members on foot patrol, but wanted to clarify that they could bring their dogs with them. Hillman answered "Yes, as long as they are on-leash."

Gay Greger suggested that there were three things that would be important for the Stewardship Group to help with:

- Education
- Community Building
- Stewardship (regular clean-ups, trail work parties)

Ron Hall suggested recommending that the Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Assoc. help form some sort of group for the OLA stewardship group in consultation with the Friends and foot patrol.

Terre recommended that the stewardship group be ready to go when the pilot begins.

Regarding enforcement, Paul Leistner said that the important thing to realize is the spill over affect into the neighborhood. He said that everyone should recognize that there are limited resources, but perhaps have enforcement commit to concentrating on Mt. Tabor Park in the first two weeks to get the message across.

Michael Schnidal asked about the forms that the park ranger provided to Sue Parish. There were concerns about the use of these forms in general because of the potential abuse.

Gay Greger said PP&R has asked its park rangers to commit one full day in each of the off-leash parks during the first week that the new rules/hours go into effect (June 2005). They will be out in the park and talking to users (with and without dogs) and handing out information - friendly education. She said that if a stewardship group is in place by this time, it would be great to have them team up with the rangers and build on their effort.

Terre - asked if there is room in the program for an arbitrator to be a mutual partner to negotiate. Members of the committee thought this was a good idea, but perhaps not feasible.

Gina wanted to make sure that the friendly education is geared toward non

dog owners as well as dog owners regarding why the off-leash area is there and why it is important. She expressed concern that non dog owners are not getting involved with the OLA and said she was disappointed that members of the committee did not show up for the clean-up last week.

Mary Mowery asked for clarification as to whether or not foliage is a part of the buffers planned for the OLA. Don McTaggart explained that the earlier effort was focused on removal of non-native invasive species and elimination of fire hazards. He said that there are plans to begin replanting natives in the area. Revegetation projects are another thing that volunteers can help with.

The committee agreed that noise issues and the need for buffers should be included in recommendations.

Evaluation Process:

There was some discussion about how to evaluate the success of the program.

Suggestions included

- regular photos
- asking the neighbors
- looking at criteria every three months
- forming a work group to develop criteria
- having the Neighborhood Association be responsible for evaluation

Elaine asked the committee how they felt about regrouping every 3 or so months to evaluate. Shannon Loch suggested having a working group to measure regularly. Mary Mowery said that it is important to let things settle out before meeting to evaluate. Meeting every 4-6 months would probably be better. Ron Hall suggested getting in touch with the high school track team to forewarn them about the need to change their access point to the park.

Diane Redd said that the committee is now incredibly well balanced as is and if the monitoring is thrown 100% to the neighborhood association, there is no guarantee of similar balance.

Gay said that it is important to recognize that OLAs will have an impact - and to determine what level is acceptable. If there are problems, rather than simply saying "It isn't working", we need to ask ourselves, as stewards of the area, what we can do to mitigate the problem. For example, can we temporarily fence areas to allow them to recover?

Elaine Cogan asked who is willing to regroup in six months or so.

Shannon Loch feels that six months is too long. She suggested meeting in

the fall/end of summer 2005.

Committee members agreed to meet again in September/October.

Gay said that PP&R's goal for Mt Tabor's OLA renovation is to key items completed in July 2005. Since the Good Neighbor Agreement won't be reviewed by the public until late May, this is a tight timeline. Work cannot begin until after that review takes place. Some things, especially the trail work may take longer.

Next Steps:

Gina Patriarca announced that this weekend C-SPOT will be in the area to talk to users about volunteering. She intends to tell users that she does not support the Good Neighbor Agreement coming out of this committee because of the decision to reduce the boundary on the east side. She challenged the committee to come out on Saturday to monitor the area. William Parish agreed to go.

The committee agreed that Paul Leistner and Gay Greger would review all the committee discussion and draft an agreement. It will be sent to the committee via email for review. Further meetings are not anticipated, but if there is a need for another meeting, it will be announced.

William Parish shared his idea to sell dog biscuits to raise money for the OLA.

Gay asked for clarification regarding the current trail in the OLA on the east side. If the recommendation is to realign the trail so it turns uphill, what do people recommend for the little spur that will continue to go straight. Will there be a gate there or will it deadend at a fence? A member of the public reminded the group that the trail on the east side is currently used by commuters. To have it deadend would do away with a traditional use of the park. Discussion followed. In reviewing the map, it was felt that because of the decision to push the boundary west by about 100', the location proposed gate and the location a gate that would be located at the boundary along the present trail would be very close. It would not make sense to put in two gates such a short distance apart.

The committee agreed to recommend only one gate on the east side.

Public Review

Diane Redd said that the OLA Good Neighbor Agreement is the only agenda item for the Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association May 18th meeting. She will get notification out to the neighborhood and to South Tabor NA as well.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

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