

# Meeting minutes



**Metro**

600 NE Grand Ave.  
Portland, OR 97232-2736

CITY OF  
GRESHAM

Meeting: Gabbert Butte Master Plan – Stakeholder Advisory Committee – meeting 3  
Date/time: Tuesday, October 10, 2017  
Place: West Gresham Elementary School - Library  
Purpose: Project updates and preliminary design

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## **Attendees**

Daisy Nguyen, Connect with Nature; Jason Howard, Johnson Creek Watershed Council; Jim Buck, Gresham Butte Neighborhood Association; Kat Conard, Neighbor; Phil Nosler, West Bliss Butte Site Steward; Whitney Bailey, East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District; Tina Osterink, City of Gresham; Torrey Lindbo, City of Gresham; Rod Wojtanik, Metro; Ellen Wyoming Deloy, Metro; Olena Turula, Metro; Mike O’Brien, Project consultant

## **Topics**

### Project updates

- The project held its first open house in July. It was well-attended 45 – 50 people attended. Online survey closed a month ago, and ~110 surveys were completed. Feedback at open house was supportive of the project. People excited about Gabbert Butte specifically. Lots of people who live in the neighborhood and feel good about the trails being formalized and for broader public use. Lots of people asking about specific connections to places they know on the site. People asked whether dogs would be allowed given Metro and Gresham’s differing policies on pets.
- Two connect with nature workshops have been held so far. Workshop 1 was broad questions about what people like to do in nature, what people like to do outside.
- Second workshop got people out to the site at Gabbert, and to imagine what a nature park could look like there. We’ve taken that feedback and will share the preliminary drafts to share today.
- We also had a natural resource discussion about Gabbert Butte prior to the last SAC meeting. We are also talking about how to integrate traditional ecological knowledge for this site and other projects.

SAC roles and responsibilities

SAC – three primary roles:

- 1) Be a sounding board, reviewing and providing feedback from your communities perspective, or your organization and providing insight about Gabbert Butte, your community's experience around Gabbert and helping us to understand the site
  - 2) Discussing and collaborating as a group to find common ground
  - 3) Inform your community and organization about the project and get the word out
- The SAC is not a decision making body – we take the recommendations from this committee and add them to other conversations, leadership, and Gresham and Metro Councils for ultimate decision making.
  - Tina: Indigenous perspective – for natural resource input – how will we do this?
  - Olena: We have Ruth on our SAC, we also have an indigenous community liaison, we are still investigating which relationships to work with and how.
  - Torrey: Is connect with nature also an advisory body?
  - Olena: Yes, they are, but they are also leading the process to inform from a community of color perspective in terms of planning since these communities have been left out so many times. Their early process involvement is informing what we bring to the SAC and other groups who then comment and advise.

Connect with Nature:

- Guide design and decision making early in the process
- Focused engagement with communities of color for Gabbert Butte
- Broad toolkit development to inform parks, natural areas and planning region wide.

Connect with Nature leaders' roles on SAC:

- Same as other SAC members - Represent your community's perspective on the SAC and Share broader engagement process with your community
- Also to help ensure transparency and consistency between Connect with Nature workshops and Gabbert Butte

Metro Parks and Nature System Plan, mission, and decision making at Gabbert Butte

- The Parks and Nature System Plan (2016) is the document guiding Parks and Nature work. The plan defined our role in parks and nature in the region. We're between the level of a federal/state (we aren't that big) and city (we're bigger and don't do the same functions with city). We have some overlap with State parks, but closer to the Portland metro area.

- Gabbert Butte was identified by the East Buttes Site Conservation Plan as most appropriate for access in the context of other Metro East Buttes natural areas to the south.
- Once we determine a site should have formal access, we look at a site and decide what's appropriate for a site:
  - 1) The Parks and Nature System Plan is our first tool – does it fit with our mission – and is it something in the purview of Metro – or is it something that's provided by City or State/fed park providers.
  - 2) A second filter is can we take care of it?
  - 3) Does it fit on the site? is it compatible with the site?
- Jason: Where will this fall in terms of City/metro policy, will it get adopted into City of Gresham's Park and Recreation, Trails and Natural Areas Master Plan (adopted 2009)?
- Olena/Tina: Ultimately yes. The plan takes into consideration previous planning efforts like the Gresham Trails Plan. The outcome will be a master plan document, adopted by Metro Council and Gresham City Council, to then be implemented over time. The master plan will likely be added to the City's 2009 Park and Recreation, Trails and Natural Areas Master Plan as an amendment.

### Preliminary trail alignments draft alternatives

Today we are asking: Are we missing anything? Is the info available and less planner and more conversational? What else?

### Olena presents

- Reviews habitat and water quality protection goals
  - Identify and maintain core habitat areas of 30 acres or more.
  - Maintain setback from streams, except to cross them. (no trails parallel to streams)
  - Minimize stream crossings and use bridges and boardwalks in sensitive areas.
  - Avoid sensitive habitat areas, or consider seasonal closure
  - Avoid steep slopes where possible
  - Use best management practices for trail construction
- Visitor experience goals
  - Provide comfortable user experience and moderate trail grades (5 to 12%).
  - Provide alternate routes where existing trails are steep. Replace trails that are eroding or are difficult to maintain.
  - Provide accessible, safe, meaningful and controlled access to views, water, wildlife viewing or other special features of the site.

- Provide experiences of varying wildness, levels of challenge and terrain.
  - Provide opportunities for and encourage discovery.
  - Provide comfortable, beautiful places to rest.
- Comment was made to add stacked loops to experience goals
- Connectivity goals
  - Connect new entry area to existing trails on Gabbert Butte.
  - Provide connectivity to saddle trail.
  - Review and consider trails proposed in City of Gresham Trails master plan.
  - Connect to existing neighborhood access points.
  - Acknowledge connection to Hogan Butte
- 4 trail design types will be included in plans:
  - asphalt or concrete for high use areas near parking lots, large enough for 3 people across
  - gravel, used for accessible trails in lower use areas, 3 across
  - natural (soil) surface wide enough for 1 person, hiking trails
  - bridges, boardwalks, overlooks
- Existing conditions of trails
  - Conversation around steepness and slope of some spots
  - Wanting to avoid switchbacks
  - One key point of view to see, wetlands
  - Add saddle trail grades to map – there is a steep section
- Trail Alignment Alternatives
  - Overall Trails shown are designed at 5 – 10 % grade
  - 1: Loop along northern portion of the site, up to top 5% grade.
  - 2: Loop including saddle trail through amphibian area, up to top 10% grade.
  - 3: Trails along southern portion of the site, leaving north portion more intact. No loops, more out and back. Up to top 5% grade (variation from option 1).
- Conversation / Questions:
  - Would we divide uses for trails?
  - Would we have loops with access? Varied gradients?
  - Good connections in places to meet people at access in other spots
  - Alternative 3 is missing key connections
  - Overall recommend making the drawings more conceptual, so they are more clear
  - Concern: horses and bikes on steeper slopes – visibility also a concern on steeper for horses and bikes
  - Pulling in the elements of one and two combine a lot of versatility and favorite features.

- What's the level of use and existing grade on the saddle trail (mountain bikes are allowed on the saddle trail) you see a few, not many. (It's a through-way, not a loop, a highly used trail.)
- Weigh resource impacts more for options in conservation view. We are targeting a 5% grade for the trail system
- The Site Conservation Plan identified the area below Butler Rd. as an area to avoid
- 30-acres of wildlife connectivity will inform the design alternatives

*Preliminary entry area & parking design draft alternatives*

- Don't want to do super expensive grading
- Celebrate Gabbert
- Welcoming to all cultures, people and abilities
- Three types:
  - 1 Family focus – medium shelter, includes play area and large meadow
  - 2 Community focus – large shelter and story circle
  - 3 Nature focus – picnic table or shelter, native plant trail, wildflower meadow
- How do these options affect the wetland? Looks like #3 could have water going towards Regner Rd. rather than the wetlands.
  - Wetland scientists to still do the work out there to assess where the wetlands are to determine where the best place is to place parking lot and if these options are realistic.
- comments
  - There is also a flat spot for possible access north of 29<sup>th</sup>
  - The short walk. interpretive loop is more appropriate to include in the family focus alternative
  - Overall – yellow trails are hard to read, can we make them darker?
  - Intersection at 29<sup>th</sup> seems safer
  - Parking away from pond so kids don't wander to it
  - Overlook in design 3 is good for wildlife viewing
  - Need to consider how parking will effect hydrology
  - Looking at 100 people coming to the site for a celebration – is that an impact for the natural area even in the big community option to be concerned about?
  - Neighbors don't want hoards of people in the park. How would it change the habitat areas we have over there?
  - A shelter might make it too welcoming for homeless

- Will be a limit to how big a group can be there based on parking so that will provide some limit on the gathering size, and the size of facilities planned
- Don't want to overwhelm the trails system
- One example to have play and solitude both in an option.
- People have emotional connections with people in place that then create strong place/nature connections (research results)

### Next Steps

- Finalize alternatives
- Open House in the early part of the new year
- Would like to meet with this group again either right before or right after the open house
- Project team will present to Gresham Butte Neighborhood Association Dec. 13 at City Hall.