



In attendance: Commission Members: Dory Waxman, Chair, Jaime Parker, Vice Chair, Councilor Brian Batson, Carol Hutchins, Meri Lowry, Michael Mertaugh, Chelsea Malacara, Colette Bouchard, Zack Anchors and Amy Segal. City Staff: Ethan Hipple, Alli Carroll, and Caitlin Cameron. Members of the public: David LaCasse and Dela Murphy of Friends of Congress Square Park, Paul Drinan of Friends of Fort Gorges, Liz Trice of Friends of Bramhall Square, and Nick Davala of PAYSA.

Parks Commission Minutes

April 5, 2017

5:00 PM

Portland City Hall

389 Congress Street, Room 24

I. General Citizen Comment Period

No comment period at this time.

II. Agenda Items (*public comment taken on action items only*)

a. Acceptance of March Meeting Minutes

Michael moved to accept the Parks Commission's March Meeting Minutes. Carol seconded. Seven in favor. Meri and Councilor Batson abstained.

b. New Business

i. Congress Square Park ReDesign Update – Caitlin Cameron

Caitlin Cameron is the Urban Designer and Project Manager for the Congress Square Redesign. She gave the Commission an overview of the project about a year ago. She came back because they are in design development. She referred to the site plan that was handed out to each Commissioner. They are now looking at lighting concepts, plantings, etc. As well as improving the intersections and accessibility to the park. They will be adding a three-piece sculpture by Sarah Sze Studio. They will also be removing the slip lane to increase the park/plaza areas for pedestrians. In order for the design to continue to move forward, the Land Bank Commission and City Council would need to give positive recommendations to remove the current trees in the space. She came to the Parks Commission for their recommendation to bring this to the Land Bank Commission.

Parks Commission's concerns were the timing of lights at intersections, the reflectivity of the sculpture at night, as well as the capacity of the park. Caitlin made note of all concerns and assured the Commission that they want to keep the current capacity level, if not increase it.

The Parks Commission recommended that this design be taken to the Land Bank Commission with their concerns taken into consideration.

ii. Funding for the Redesign – David LaCasse

David explained the public private partnership between the City of Portland, Portland Public Art Committee and the Friends of Congress Square Park. \$2.7 million is the total goal. The Friends of Congress Square Park plans on a 100% pledge by February 2020 for CIP reasons. They also need to work with the City on an MOU.

Dela brought a rough draft of what will be happening at the park this upcoming season. They have a new partnership with the Silent Book Club and Space Gallery. The Maine College of Art students will have a 30-day period to paint a mural on the side of the Westin. She also highlighted the Therapeutic Horticulture program where Reiche students who will be matched with seniors to plant in the park. Dela graciously invited the Commission members to come join the events.

iii. PAYSA Update – Nick Davala

PAYSA has been around for about thirty years and offer Spring and Summer opportunities. They are working towards being able to offer Fall and Winter programs as well. They had close to nine hundred participants last year. Six thousand community service hours are put towards these

programs. They also offer a scholarship program. Their biggest challenges are looking for field space and reaching the immigrant population. Meri suggested Portland housing authority to help with immigrant families.

iv. Ft. Gorges Update – Paul Drinan

Paul shared the history of the Friends of Fort Gorges and the current efforts to improve the safety and structure of Fort Gorges. In 2017, the Army Corp made a great effort to block off hazardous areas. They are very close to signing and MOU with the City and are planning to have two tours per week this summer for the public. Paul continued by sharing details of the Economic Impact Study. The Commission was curious of the long term plan so that the Fort isn't loved to death. Ethan added that there is a preservation plan for the area and a public private partnership set with the Friends Group. Once it's preserved, a future plan will be decided.

v. Bramhall Square Competition – Liz Trice

Bramhall Square is about the same size as Longfellow Square. They held a competition to begin working towards its improvements. Thirteen firms made presentations. One hundred eighty-five people voted on their favorites. Liz shared the winning and other top designs. She also explained how the grade is the biggest challenge. They are in need guidance to take this design to the next step. Ethan would be happy to get together to discuss it further but their focus should be to get on the City's CIP list.

c. Communications/Updates

i. Ordinance Ad Hoc Committee Update

Dory explained that the ordinances for the Land Bank and Parks Commission sunset soon, so they have created a committee to discuss what worked, what didn't and what overlapped. Those in the Committee are the chairs of each commission, Meri the representative of both Commissions, Ethan Hipple and Sally DeLuca.

ii. Parks Conservancy – Ethan

The Parks Conservancy approved position descriptions for the Executive Director and will hopefully have one by June. There are six vacancies for board members. The vice chair, secretary and treasurer were approved. Meri would like to see the MOU before it is fully approved.

iii. Subcommittee Updates

Finance Subcommittee is in its early stages of recreating the Gift Catalogue but are thinking of naming it "Giving Back to Portland's Parks".

Community Outreach Subcommittee is planning the Green Space Gathering. They are still looking for a speaker.

Park Initiatives Subcommittee has collected the data for the Baxter Trail project.

Annual Report Subcommittee has done a first draft. They will be revamping and sending out another draft soon.

iv. Parks Division Updates – Ethan

Everyone looked over the memo of updates that Ethan provided and thanked him for the Parks Division's hard work.

Michael moved to adjourn the meeting, Meri seconded. All in favor.