

Oregon Country Fair Path Planning Committee
Feb. 20, 2011. Started at Noon

Committee Members: Steve Wisnovsky, Kirk Shultz, Paxton Hoag, Jon Pincus, John Burgess, Dennis Todd, Chris Browne, Michael Richard, Colleen Bauman, Sylvia Freeman, Wally Jones, Justin Honea.

Committee Members Not Present: Susanna DeFazio, Jay Hogan, Deane Morrow, Tom Churchill, Dean Middleton, David Tipton.

Guests: Mark Pankratz, William Wright, Bear Pitts, David.

Justin Honea facilitated, Mark Pankratz took the minutes.

Approval of Minutes

November: Jon wanted a correction so that it was known that he never said during a Gypsy Way conversation that the use of the word was “kind of humorous.” This may have been corrected already but the revised minutes have yet to be posted. Chris moved to approve the November minutes as amended. It was seconded, voted on, and passed unanimously.

January: Jon pointed out a typo on something he said. It should say “way” not “was” ...something should happen. Page 9 or 10... Chris moved to approve the January minutes as amended. It was seconded, voted on, and passed unanimously.

Dawn stepped down as scribe for personal/time reasons. She may come back. Many people expressed their thanks to her for all her great work. Mark Pankratz agreed to take notes for this meeting. Justin agreed to contact Marlene to see if she will be available for the next meeting. Someone said that Peggy may be back in July. This is practice for Mark.

Public Comment

Bear said that he was glad to finally be able to make a PP meeting.

Agenda Review/Amend/Approve

Colleen suggested adding a section to the Agenda called “Board Report,” an official time to talk about what happened at the most recent BoD meeting, to facilitate communication between the Board and the committee. Could go right before or after the Staff Reports. It was pointed out that there is a board liaison on the committee (John Burgess). The board member can not speak for the board. The intent is to keep the committee informed as to what the board is doing/thinking. Wally moved and it was seconded to move the discussion from new to old business. Motion passed unanimously. (This never actually came up again later...)

Dennis asked to move his talk as a LUMP member about Gypsy Way as a green zone from new to old business. There was a larger discussion about the order of things to be talked about today, and what to put off until next month. The discussion about pocket parks was tabled until next month. Colleen moved to accept today’s agenda as amended, it was seconded and passed unanimously.

Staff Report

Steve talked about a new section of the bank falling into the river near the log jam. He talked about the trees that have been tethered to help influence where they land after they fall in. A past success with this can be seen near Dharma Garden. We only do this with trees we have planted. Big leaf maples don't do as well, red alders do better. They were planted knowing that they would go in eventually. Steve also passed around a binder with some pictures and other information from a person that did a site visit. This person has a company (Bioengineering Associates) in northern California that does river bank control. And last but not least, go for a walk, enjoy the site!

Subcommittee Reports

Entry Subcommittee: Chris talked about a capital project request the subcommittee turned in. It was for some shade structures and some flags. The budget committee only approved enough money for a prototype build, one of each. This subcommittee will meet again.

Long Range Planning: The LRP subcommittee has met twice since the last full committee meeting, on January 8th and February 6th. At the Jan. 8th meeting they looked at geographic and regulatory constraints of the whole site. There was also extensive discussion of Public and Internal growth of the past and projections into the future. Full report here:

Subcommittee minutes by Dennis Todd.

On Jan. 8, 2011, the subcommittee met at Alice's. Present: Sylvia Fireman, Susanna Defazio, Chris Browne, Jon Pincus, Colleen Bauman, Steve Wisnovsky, Michael Richard, Dennis Todd, Amber Peoples, Mark Pankratz

Geographic and regulatory constraints of the site were discussed. Within the Activities Zone of the non-conforming use permit, in addition to the existing public path areas, public activities can take place in Gypsy Way, Crafts Lot, the recycling dock area, Kermit's lot, Miss Piggy's lot, da Woods (south half), and the woods south of Chela Mela.

Outside the current Activities Zone, but with terrain suitable for public use, are Traffic Camp and Marshall's Landing. A traditional forest path and open space could be developed in these areas if zoning regulations were to change, but new service roads would have to be developed. Because of operational and family uses, the upland properties along Chickadee Lane would not be appropriate to include in the public space for the event. The slope up from the lowlands is problematic for public paths.

Public attendance has grown little in the past 20 years, but the internal population has increased substantially. We can limit the tickets sold but the number of passes continues to increase. Options to accommodate growth in attendance include adding more public space, opening the fair a second weekend or for four or five days (which would be outside the scope of our non-conforming use permit), and limiting internal growth (considered unlikely).

The growing internal population crowds the paths as much as the public does. Expanding camping for fair family will be necessary, and it may be wise to plan on incorporating informal stages, gathering areas, and other amenities in new camping areas to disperse our own crowds.

Steve pointed out that we have a limit on public attendance, but it's effective only on Saturdays. On Fridays and Sundays, the attendance is well below the limit. Chris said that seniors come on Friday, exhibitionists on Saturdays, and families on Sundays. Jon: programming is important, especially music. The right offering could increase the draw on Fridays and Sundays. Mark: We need the big picture at the bus entrance.

Dennis calculated the following population estimates based on different rates of growth of our internal population. Although the estimate of 16,000 fair family in 2010 may be a bit high, the trajectories remain the same. In the next few years the number of campers will almost certainly exceed the 18,000 cap that we now put on public attendance.

growth rate	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
1%/yr	16,000	18,000	20,000	22,000	24,000
3%/yr	16,000	22,000	29,000	39,000	52,000
5%/yr	16,000	26,000	42,000	69,000	113,000
7%/yr	16,000	31,000	62,000	122,000	240,000

If the number of campers on site was 12,000 in 2000, the growth rate per year over the past decade was 3%. If the number of participants in 1970 was 1,000, the growth rate in the past 40 years has been 7% per year (a rate that leads to doubling every decade). The U.S. population is growing at almost 1% per year.

The Feb. 6th meeting focused the areas previously identified as possible public areas. Full report here:

Subcommittee minutes by Dennis Todd.

On 2/6/11, the subcommittee met at Alice's. Present: Steve Wisnovsky, Colleen Bauman, Mark Pankratz, Michael Richard, Dennis Todd, Jon Pincus.

We took detailed looks at the different areas that could be opened to the public. We agreed that the bus entrance should remain as it is. It's important to deliver riders as close as possible to the event. The admissions booths should stay where they are because the long, shady stacking lane is necessary to hold riders who arrive before 11:00 AM. Only if Traffic Camp were opened to the public and the service and bus roads re-routed would it be appropriate to relocate the bus stop. [The full committee had earlier reviewed the location of the Dragon entrance gate and determined that it should remain where it is for the foreseeable future.]

We discussed the fate of Main Camp if the kitchen were to move. The Bus Entrance and Indian Creek isolate Main Camp from Gypsy Way and the Left Bank. Plans that have been proposed for Gypsy Way would not be affected by future uses of Main Camp with the possible exception of noise conflicts. Because of nearby stages, quiet uses would be appropriate. Options for the area include child care, a public park, booth spaces, a food court, elders' hangout, OCF booths, and family hospitality. We discussed whether the quartermaster, registration booth, and construction desk should stay or go, but reached no recommendation.

Miss Piggy's parking lot could be opened to the public. Because it is a high-value seasonal wetland that stays wet late in the spring, care would need to be taken to avoid damaging the environment. Some of the area might be unusable in wet years. The impermeable clay soil will not support trees, so shade would have to be provided. All structures would have to be removed before winter. It could be an attractive venue for big second-event concerts late in the summer.

The Crafts Lot would also be a good site for second events. A big stage in Crafts Lot is not recommended because of sound conflict with Stage Left. Any booths in the central area should be removable for second events, although food booths need more substantial structures and should be placed accordingly. Fences and gates should keep second event concert-goers out of the loops.

The woods south of the Crafts Lot and Chela Mela could be developed as public paths, but noise from Highway 126 can be a problem. This area offers one of the last shady areas for path development and may be appropriate when all Harleys are electric.

To accommodate internal growth, we should park vehicles off site and buy, lease, or rent neighboring properties for fair family camping. Shuttle service will be necessary to and from neighboring camp sites and remote parking lots for fair family vehicles.

The Board sponsored long-range planning work session was postponed indefinitely. The purpose/appropriateness of long range planning was discussed. When does planning need more or less detail? Some people argued that you can only plan so much and then you have to let the detail on the ground dictate the results. Should the PPC be looking at LR or only focused on the immediate concern of booths falling into the river, etc.? The idea of "Long Range" vs. "Big Picture," "Master Plan," was brought up. One of the big values of LR planning for this committee is that sometimes people say you can't do this or that until we know what is going to happen in some other place. The camping crew has been formed, will be voted on in April. This will facilitate the movement of people, one of the first steps in changing certain places. Go for a walk, look at the path along the river. It's falling into the river. The PPC needs to look to the future to have direction. Some people expressed frustration that the board hasn't really given the PPC much direction. The plans put forward to the board were rejected so what happens next? Segue...

(one hour into the meeting)

Gypsy Way/Crafts Lot Refinement Subcommittee: The committee has not talked about Crafts Lot yet. They did meet with Child Care crew members. There seems to be widespread support for using the Gypsy Way area for child care. What part of the area to use was looked at. One was the north end, the other was near the Rabbit Hole. It was asked that it be placed in the minutes how important this issue is. Child Care has said that there are times when they have to close early in the day because they are full. Many of the kids are fair family and this limits our ability to serve the public. Can you imagine walking all the way from the entrance to child care (up by the Ritz) and not being able to use the service because it's full? The need for a child care near the entrance has been known for a while. What options are available for child care for family that is not in the eight? The idea was put forth that the elders could share the area. Because the area near the existing elders area is getting smaller that the elders will want/need to move. A number of people agreed that a scaled back version of GW was possibly the best way to move forward with something positive for this year. The importance of giving the board options was pointed out. This led to: Colleen moved that the committee craft/refine GW plan to be put on as new Board business in March, to be voted on in April. The full plan does not have to be ready until the end of March. The motion was seconded. There was discussion about the relative size of the area to use, and if to use a public design charrette or just use committee people. It was decided to use committee members. The question was called. The motion to call passed unanimously. The original motion passed 11 for, 2 against. (There was a lot more argument about how to use the area, what exists there, and how many campers). This segued into...

Designating Gypsy Way as a Green Space?:

Dennis put on his LUMP hat and passed around some papers about the Eugene Wetlands Plan.

Full report here:

By Dennis Todd.

LUMP manual conservation zones

The LUMP committee designated conservation zones at OCF in the early 1990s by following the same conservation principles that Eugene adopted in the pioneering West Eugene Wetlands Plan (WEWP). To keep industrial development compact and to maximize the benefit of conservation and mitigation, the WEWP dedicated some low-value, highly impacted wetlands to industrial development while restoring and conserving high-value habitat. A developer would have to pay for the restoration of two or three acres to mitigate converting one acre of wetlands to other uses.

Before the WEWP was implemented, mitigation sites were chosen more for convenience and availability than for long-term conservation. In the Plan, wetlands for restoration were chosen on the basis of location, size, connectivity, and extant plant community, among other factors. The Plan became an international model for wetlands mitigation that creates the highest overall habitat and urban values.

The principles of conservation biology were derived from ecological theory and experiments in island biogeography. "Islands" can be any habitat that is isolated from other similar habitats, such as a remote coral atoll, a city park, or a conservation reserve. Reserve habitat design is based on observations that species numbers are greatest on "islands" that are:

- Close to a "mainland," a large area that can be a source of immigrants
- Connected by migratory corridors to similar habitats
- Occupied by native species
- Large enough to include whole functional units and environmental gradients
- Shaped to minimize edge effects and maximize core area
- Subjected to small-scale disturbance

The size of the reserve is of paramount importance. The larger the protected area, the greater the biodiversity and the lower the extinction rates. The LUMP committee recognized that the Unorganized Territory and Indian Creek would be the OCF areas most appropriate for conservation reserves. Site tours with wetlands scientists also led to the designation of Maui, Wauai, and the nearby woods as a conservation zone because of the now-rare Oregon ash - slough sedge plant community found there. In 2010, the LUMP committee designated 24 acres of newly-acquired Indian Creek channel, called "Mauldin Marsh," as a conservation reserve and for mitigation for fair impacts elsewhere. Contiguous with the Unorganized Territory and increasing its area by 60%, the marsh was grazed by cattle until OCF purchased it. Restoration efforts should be exerted to shape the wooded wetlands that will recover.

On a landscape scale, Gypsy Way by itself is too small to be significant habitat for most vertebrates, but it is part of a larger habitat, the ash forest along the old creek bed, which extends from the Sauna to the Recycling Dock (and upstream into Traffic Camp). It is zoned for public paths, camping, and other uses. Throughout most of this habitat, use by the public and family is heavy, but wildlife adapts. Many species of plants, including the wildflowers blossoming in booths, are able to thrive only because of the disturbance we cause. But Gypsy Way shows what happens when disturbance ceases and neglect follows.

The dominance of blackberry in the understory is a result of annual indiscriminate brush cutting that ended suddenly and was not followed by maintenance. Invasive plants thrive under this

regime. If GW were to serve as a conservation zone, lots of work would be needed to rehabilitate it to standards prescribed in the LUMP manual. Its neglect should not continue. However, if the work required to restore GW were instead applied to Mauldin Marsh, the outcome would be much better for nature.

GW is too large for green zone designation; "conservation zone" would be more appropriate. The term "Green Zone" is usually used to refer to a vegetated buffer zone between campsites. (The greatest loss of undergrowth has been due to camping expansion around booths.) The LUMP committee struggled to define green zones and protocols that their defenders could use to protect them. Neighborhood agreement is a major hurdle that must be overcome before a green zone can be mapped and protected. To date, no green zone has met the criteria for formal recognition and mapping.

(two hours into the meeting)

The area is currently designated by the LUMP committee as a mixed use area. There was some back and forth about the area as a sound buffer. More people spoke up about the limited amount of native plant life. If a new path is laid out near the existing path it will not interfere with any wildlife corridor. Another argument erupted about the use of the area. The group decided to take a break.

Kirk said; "At first we thought we would put a big stage in the area but that is no longer on the table." (back to general) It is out of the lower flood area. If we develop it, it will be like the rest of our path area. The gist of the argument is that most of the committee believes the area should be developed and a small minority believes it should be left as is because it has value as a green area (regardless of type of plants, could be rehabilitated) and functions as a sound buffer.

There was a suggested motion, to the board, by Paxton about developing Crafts Lot. Some people felt that because the committee is already working on it that it was not necessary. The motion needs to be directed at operations to do the camping and barter fair pieces of the puzzle. Paxton said he would take it home and work on it.

Refine Year Long Committee Work Plan

March 6 Work session for new GW proposal

Email contact to plan for this encouraged.

March 20 General Meeting

April 3 Optional Crafts Lot Meeting

April 17 General Meeting

May 1 Optional Entry Meeting

May 15 General Meeting

Subcommittees Review

Redesign Morningwood (Inactive).

Refine Crafts Lot and Gypsy Way (Active).

Camping (Inactive)

Long-range Planning (Active)

Traffic and pedestrian patterns (?)

Entrances (Active)

Pocket Parks (on hold)

Paxton talked about adding the money for the entry way flags and shade structures back into the capitol project budget. The board asked for an up-date to the area. There was wide support for this.

Meeting ended at 3:25pm