

Friends of Pier Park

March 26, 2013

6:30 pm - 8:15 pm

On March 28th Friends of Pier Park Held its monthly meeting. The following are the minutes. Thank you to all who joined us!

- A question was raised regarding the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. The minutes from the previous meeting should have indicated that there was a number of people who were opposed to the removal of the single Giant Sequoia tree.

- Earth Day celebration and SOLV clean up of Pier Park is Saturday, April 20. Arrive at 9:00am. There will be pastries from Tulip bakery and coffee from Anna Bananas.

There is a need to establish 4 teams for the clean up process. A couple positions or team captains were established but we need to identify the remainder of the team members.

-Graffiti removal team:

-Litter removal team: Michael

-Invasive plant removal team: Philip Fensterer, Gil Luzader, Mary Ann, Vicky.

-Disk golf course maintenance team:

-We also need to identify an individual who will remain at the table to direct incoming volunteers. Melissa offered to take whatever leftover role needed to be filled.

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-The Repurposing of the downed Sequoia tree. Creating a memorial.

-Sue from Portland Parks expressed a commitment to do something to honor the tree. However there is no defined budget to create art.

-Introduced Bob as the individual who will be under contract to produce structures for the Westmoreland park from the tree and to produce Pier Park memorial, also from the tree.

-Pam Lee expressed offense that nature park folks were not consulted first with regards to the disposition of the wood. Expressed "that's our wood. it belongs to the peninsula".

-Sue corrected that the trees belong to the city.

-Q: Can the sequoia wood be used in the bridge? A: No. It is too soft and not used for structural purposes.

-CT expressed that it is a "sacred grove". Talked about the sequoia being a "surface rooter", and that the memorial should be vertical and more than 6 feet in height.

-Mary Ann reminded us that due to separation of church and state, it can not be referred to as a "sacred grove"

-Sue discussed how there are many users of the park who would want to have involvement in the decision of how to best honor the tree and that we need to be respectful of Bob's time.

-There was confusion and concern regarding apparent time constraints to decide on how best to make use of the wood.

-A decision was made to form a committee of interested parties who would further discuss options for best honoring the tree. Melissa has contact information for these people.

-Bob talked about re-purposing wood being a relatively new concept for Portland.

-It was asked if Bob had photos of his work. He passed around a brochure and indicated that photos were also available on his website.

-Q: what is the life expectancy of the sequoia wood? A: Not long unless treated. Bob has a treatment that he is very confident in. It is a one time application. It makes the wood stable and hard. It is non toxic.

-Bob let us know he is not an artist but a "mechanic". He will not be carving an "eagle" or "fish" from the wood.

-One suggestion was to do something "totemic" with the wood.

-A couple suggestions for increasing the longevity of the piece is to keep it off the ground, and the top should be cut at an angle in order to not pool water and to discourage birds from landing.

- Suggestion: Piece that expresses the silence and serenity of the sequoia grove.
- Suggestion: focus on qualities that we want to elicit in the piece.
- ` -It was discussed that the funds to pay for the work are limited if any.
- Agreed that we do not want a bench.
- The St Johns Neighborhood Association is waiting on direction from Friends of Pier Park before.....
- Admiration was expressed for a piece that Bob did that is located at Silver Falls State Park.
- Interest in involving Sitton school and the students was expressed.
- The timeline for the project was repeatedly questioned and a month to 6 weeks was suggested as possible for deciding on what to do.
- Concern expressed over trying to make decision with a constrictive timeline and no money. "Why even bring it up?"
- FOPP has money in account that may be voted on and used.
- Suggestions: vertical, where it can be seen and direct people to the grove.
- Observation: "the grove was planted and it is the only place left to meditate and not risk being hit by an errant disk".
- Observation: "Pier Park was a grant to the city"
- Q: Is it possible to prioritize work on Westmoreland project in order to give FOPP time to decide on plan? A: Yes. However there was a question of the wood being used for something else if waiting too long.
- Suggestion: mixed media piece. Counter that mixed media piece will require much more public input and push the time on the project.
- What does the "vetting" process look like for the concept that is eventually proposed for the piece to honor the tree?
- Bob offered to stay in touch with the group regarding the process. However it was qualified that he will not be the official contact between FOPP and the project to honor the tree.
- It is still unclear/unknown what amount of the tree will be available for the purpose of the memorial. However, it did sound as though there may be as much as a 12 foot section. Sequoia grove may qualify.

-Status of application for Heritage Status for the remaining Sequoia grove.

- There is a city process and a state process with different parameters.
 - Some city parameters include: adding new species that are not already represented in the city, and adding trees that do not already have Heritage trees.
 - Michael McCluskey is the chairman of the Portland Heritage Tree committee. He believes there is also a political process involved in getting a tree/group of trees declared heritage.
 - The sequoia grove may also qualify for 2 of 3 of the state parameters.
 - Applications for heritage tree status are due at the end of April.
- It was said that there was an email that said we would discuss the bridge at this meeting (FOPP 3/26), but not all in attendance got that email.
- A feeling was expressed that the Meeting on April 24 about the bridge will be too late.
 - Dennis Keepes discussed the proposed asphalt pad that is depicted in plans to extend straight from the Pier Park end of the bridge. The pad is depicted as 10'x65' and there is great concern that this will negatively impact the grove of sequoia trees, either by directly impacting roots where it is placed, or by creating a situation where bridge users scatter upon exiting the pad and therefore compact ground around the trees, potentially harming roots. Dennis provided a document "Concerned Citizens Regarding the Pier/Chimney Bridge Project and Impacts on the Pier Park Sequoia Grove".
 - Q: Have the concerns raised in the document been confirmed by a forester? A: No.
 - There is a concern that the path from the bridge will "Kill trees".
 - Mary Ann cited the roads and activities through the redwoods as examples of similar situations that have not impacted the trees negatively. However, it was pointed out that these are different species of trees.

-There was also mention of a need for a 30 foot buffer to maintain tree health. This needs more clarification.

Motion 1: Friends of Pier Park agree with the recommendations in the document "Concerned Citizens Regarding the Pier/Chimney Bridge Project and Impacts on the Pier Park Sequoia Grove".

` -Seconded.

-For: 10

-Against: 3

Motion 2: A certified forester review and support the recommendations/concerns in the document "Concerned Citizens Regarding the Pier/Chimney Bridge Project and Impacts on the Pier Park Sequoia Grove".

-Seconded

-For: 12

-Against: 1

The meeting ran over our allotted time in the community center.