

**Port Of Camas-Washougal
October 26, 2011 Community Open House: Waterfront Planning**

The Port hosted a Community Open House Meeting Wednesday, October 26th at the Camas-Washougal Municipal Courthouse building from 6:00 PM to 8:45 PM to discuss plans for revitalizing the Washougal Waterfront. The planning area extends from the public Marina east to 6th Street. The event was attended by some 40 people representing the community, local government and the Port's technical consulting team.



After a series of very brief presentations on the existing conditions on the site, the Port's facilitators Jim Darling and Dave Christensen (Maul Foster & Alongi) led the attendees through an interactive discussion of the community's vision for the waterfront and its relation to the Cities of Camas and Washougal.

EXISTING CONDITIONS:

Several field studies of the physical conditions of the waterfront are underway, including characterization of possible environmental contamination; geo-physical analysis of soils; assessment of critical areas such as wetlands; and investigation of historical and cultural resources. While the work has not yet been completed, indications are that these issues are not impediments to development of future uses on the waterfront. However, the final results will not be known for several weeks.

The waterfront has been recently re-zoned for a broad range of commercial uses. The Historic Park and Marina Park have been re-zoned as public open space and are "protected" from commercial development.

The existing utilities have sufficient capacity to accommodate redevelopment.

COMMUNITY INPUT:

The intent of the Open House was to formulate a vision for the site from community input, capture observations about the site and temper that with the economic realities of the market place and development, before attempting to create a site plan and land use model.

Thoughts and observations were captured and summarized as follows:

Concerns:

1. Waterfront Access is both a key asset and a major desire of the community.
2. Create a different commercial environment from Camas and Washougal's existing downtowns – this new place should not compete with the historical town centers, which are struggling to find their own identities and be attractive to businesses, but give lift to them.
3. No big box retail, although the right anchor tenant is critical to ensure the economic success of the development.
4. Parking is a big issue – there is not enough currently to accommodate Marina demand, boat launch demand and seasonal outdoor events. More boat trailer parking is needed – some of this may be accomplished simply by paving and striping, but this will be a challenge. Structured parking is too costly so a balance of uses and required parking will have to be carefully considered.
5. Market reality – ultimate uses and site configuration should be driven by what is feasible and can provide long-term economic sustainability of the area.

Interests:

1. Name: Parker's Landing reflects original land claim and early settler of area.
2. Theme: Riverfront, pioneer nautical
3. Connection to downtown – ensure good pedestrian and bike access to downtown areas of Camas and Washougal. Connect with an area / region-wide running and bike trail.
4. Community Center – need for a multi-use space, with some indoor or covered facilities
5. Preserve the existing parks. Set peninsula area aside for open space.

Land Use:

1. Quality restaurant options
2. Mixed commercial uses
3. REI-type outdoor store is the type of anchor tenant that would be desirable
4. Light tourism such as craft or trade manufacturing (i.e., Port Townsend)

5. Class "A" office
6. Water sports / Boat rental near inlet
7. Don't preclude future marina (expansion) in front of 25 acres. While there are no plans to expand the existing Marina now, the upland development should not preclude considering that in the future if warranted – regional boating community is looking for destinations.

Design:

1. No big box or tilt-up type construction – or at least something obviously so. Façade articulation and fenestration can address sense of scale on larger footprint buildings.
2. 'Grant Central' development was cited as a good example.
3. 'Beaches' style shoreline with bump-outs – 10-12 foot wide multi-use trail – opportunity to incorporate historical markers.
4. Main Street look
5. View corridors – down to the water and west to the park monument
6. Sense of place – something that differentiates it from other commercial developments
7. Nice landscaping, property maintained

NEXT STEPS:

The next steps will be the completion of the site investigation. It is expected that the Port will hold a follow-up community meeting in early 2012 and present more specific site plan considerations.

