



Oregon Solutions
Humboldt Team Meeting
July 16, 2008

Attendees:

Jamila Williams, Sean Waller, Micaela Boesche, Humboldt School
Doug Capps, PPS
Debbie Bishop, City of Portland Bureau of Planning
John Keating, HAP
Carol Herzberg, PDC
Gary Marschke, North and NE Business Coalition
MaryAlecia Briggs, representing Representative Shields
Wendy Willis and Kim Travis, Oregon Solutions

I. Introductions and announcements

Wendy Willis announced that Co-convener Representative Shields is not able to attend today but MaryAlicia will be reporting back to him about the meeting. Co-convener Lorenzo Poe is out with a back injury and also not able to attend.

John Keating gave an overview of the activities at Humboldt Garden including a family picnic and the Boys and Girls Club summer school which has been taking place at Humboldt School and will now move to Humboldt Garden.

Carol Herzberg announced the Dawson Park dedication of the new gazebo.

II. Subcommittee Reports

Kim Travis handed out an overview of the Master Plan subcommittee that met on July 16. Components of the master plan are:

1. Learning and Growing Garden
2. Playground
3. Additional field south of fenced playground

HAP has reserve funds left from the construction of Humboldt Garden and will dedicate these funds to the Learning and Growing Garden project at Humboldt School. There is an issue of lead contamination in the soil that needs further investigation so the work of leveling the garden will not happen until early spring 2009 with the help of Brad Bain of Michael Willis Architects and working closely with Sean and Micaela. The subcommittee will research the needed permits and put together a sustainability plan for the ongoing maintenance of the Learning and Growing Garden. Wendy suggested looking into the option of an AmeriCorps position to assist with the programmatic needs of the Learning Garden. Regarding the other elements of the Master Plan, PPS is providing a prototype of playgrounds and equipment for review by Humboldt School. A

field is needed for soccer and other group sport activities. The adjacent property south of the fenced school yard could be developed in a way that is accessible to the neighborhood. Carol Herzberg reported that Humboldt Neighborhood has been identified Interstate URA Strategy as parks deficient. Portland Parks and Recreation has expressed an initial willingness to use SDC funds to purchase a property in the Humboldt neighborhood. PDC could possibly participate in the development of a public park. The Interstate URA Strategy will be open for public comment in the next few months.

The subcommittee will also meet with community police representatives to discuss safety and vandalism issues. In addition, Debbie Bishop will follow up with PDOT about Safer Routes to School. This is a critical issue as Alberta Street is very busy during the morning and afternoon commute. Students from Humboldt Garden will be crossing the street at a very busy intersection and the speed limit is 30 miles an hour. There is a tremendous need to discuss the safety of these children. It is hoped that we have a preliminary sketch of the Learning and Growing Garden at the school opening so parents can get a sense for what is happening.

Sean Waller updated the group on the Technology needs at Humboldt. He is waiting to hear back from PPS about teacher computer upgrades. The budget for all of the technology needs at Humboldt is \$54,000 when procuring the equipment through PPS. It is also possible to receive donations of computer equipment but there must be a service plan with the donations. Humboldt School needs to add a Microsoft Windows computer lab with 30 computers. He discussed that Learning.com is a potential partner in technology. It was suggested by the team there are other potential community assets to be tapped to fill this need including churches. Humboldt School already has an adopt-a-class program with active partners.

If Humboldt develops as a Center for the neighborhood, the hope is to increase the connection between the neighborhood and the school. It would be beneficial for parents to come to Humboldt for classes at night and utilize computers.

III. Catchment Discussion

Kim handed out highlights from the PDC Infill Study report and the group discussed the findings, along with the demographic data from PPS. The PDC report suggests that Humboldt School has an opportunity to increase catchment by marketing the school to neighborhood families. The PDC report suggests that increasing the number of neighborhood children that attend Humboldt will have a positive effect on enrollment versus trying to achieve the same gains by building new housing. It was mentioned that newly elected Commissioner Nick Fish is interested in this topic and our Co-conveners will meet with him to discuss Humboldt School, housing, and marketing the school to the neighborhood. Overall Humboldt School needs a long-term catchment and enrollment plan.

Wendy Willis introduced the Mary Reike Growth Plan as an example of a PPS school once in danger of closing due to low enrollment. The plan is available at the Oregon

Solutions Humboldt School web page:

<http://www.orsolutions.org/metrohood/humboldtschool.htm>

The committee at Reike conducted research and analysis about the school and neighborhood. This could help inform work of the Humboldt team in moving forward with community outreach and neighborhood survey. In conducting outreach, the team determined that they need a one page overview highlighting the assets of Humboldt School. Jamila and other staff will work on this one pager at the beginning of the school year, including information about student retention. Gary Marschke suggested that the team work with the North/NE Neighborhood Coalition as they are developing a survey tool to build capacity in the Humboldt neighborhood. He will get in touch with Sylvia Evans to follow up on this. It was also suggested that the team review a recent study by Our United Villages (also available on the OS website).

The team moved on to discuss current enrollment including the option for an additional pre-K class. Jamila reported that the pre-K is always filled and sometimes she needs to turn away neighborhood kids. But it is difficult to get an additional pre-K teacher in advance to plan for expansion. By January or February Humboldt Gardens will be filled and so it may be easier to forecast for an additional pre-K class. Since there are less restrictions on the funds, it is possible that foundations funds or CHIF funds could be utilized to pay for an additional pre-K teacher.

Humboldt School would also benefit from becoming a SUN school. It is unclear about the basis for determining a SUN school – is it enrollment? It was suggested that Jamila and Lorenzo meet with a Site Council member to discuss this option.

IV. Next Steps

The team will meet again in early September and the subcommittees will meet in August.