

Spokane PFD Community Meeting for Convention Center Completion
December 12, 2012
Summary

This meeting is required by the City of Spokane for projects requiring Type II Applications, in this case a Shoreline Substantial Development Permit. We will record and compile notes of questions and comments as part of the permit process.

The purpose of the project is to complete the 2005 Spokane Convention Center, that because of cost inflation was not built to full plans. The Exhibit hall would be expanded to the north and east, with the addition of a new ballroom on the first or the second level, and new meeting rooms with support spaces on the ground floor.

Boundary of Spokane CC Completion site:

Existing convention center on the south

Division Street Bridge on the east

West Convention Center Building on the west

Centennial Trail on the north

Project will include the maintenance of the Centennial Trail, and restoration of the bank of the Spokane River, property owned by the Spokane Parks Department.

The basis for the planning to date is the February 2011 Concept Design Report developed by a team consisting of ALSA and LMN architects, landscape architect, engineers, PFD staff, with input from various stakeholders.

Actions within the 200-foot shoreline boundary.

- Demolish the former Shenanigan's restaurant and remove parking lot
- Remove the East-West arbor and incorporate the site into the project.
- Reroute existing sewer line outside the footprint of the building
- Construct the addition to the Convention Center-about 91,000 square feet of exhibit, meeting, and support space – improve the face to the river.
- Improve the eroded bank of the Spokane River
- Improve the Centennial Trail
- Improve public access

Work completed to date:

Pre-development Conference

Design Review meeting – initial

Completion of Habitat/plant survey

Completion of draft Traffic Letter

CPARB – Project Review Committee approval

Development of RFQ for Design-Build team selection

Process

Submit shoreline substantial development permit, Environmental Checklist, JARPA Permit, with supporting information such as traffic letter and habitat survey. It is expected that the Shoreline Development Permit, based on the conceptual plans would be approved with conditions that would apply to the completion of the building and site design. These conditions would require Design Review, habitat/landscape plan, plan for managing ground contamination and other permitting.

Select design-build team that will develop the final design for the building, site and riverbank improvements.

Planning for and development of a place at which to put in and take out canoes and kayaks (with stakeholder participation).

Coordinate with Department of Ecology, Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Army Corps of Engineers for Riverbank restoration.

Community Meeting Notes:

The Community Meeting was held on 12/12/12 in room 207 at the Spokane Convention Center, beginning at 6PM and with close of comments at 6:32 PM.

The Community Meeting followed a Stakeholder meeting in the same room. The Stakeholder meeting opened at 4:30 PM with an open house to discuss the various display boards that depicted the concept exhibits from the 2/22/2011 Spokane Convention Center Completion Study. A presentation was made at 5PM followed by a Question and Answer period. This meeting ended at 6PM with the opening of the Community Meeting.

Thirty-four individuals signed up for the community meeting (lists provided). PFD staff recorded the meeting (CD provided).

Jim Kolva, consultant for the PFD, presided over the meeting. Bill White, Traffic Consultant, also presented findings from his traffic study and convention attendee surveys. Kevin Twohig, CEO of the PFD, and Mick McDowell, Chairman of the PFD Board were present to answer questions.

Kolva provided an overview based on the outline above. Bill White presented an overview of his study and findings. A key point he made is that 50-60 percent of the attendees park at their hotels and walk. Attendees that drive do use PFD parking facilities. He concluded that the expansion would not have a significant impact on traffic in downtown, since a significant portion of attendees walk. White also discussed impact fees and noted that the project would make a fee contribution based on a trip generation formula.

Several Questions were asked during the presentations:

1. Question: Regarding the Traffic Study; was the scope primarily looking at motorized traffic rather than bicyclists and pedestrians?

Response –Yes, the study focused predominantly on motor vehicle traffic; trying to validate concurrency and capacity on the roadways as it relates to vehicular traffic. White noted, however, the extent of pedestrian traffic.

2. Question – Was building originally designed for a 50-foot setback, if so why is it now 75 feet?

Response – The building was truncated because of the significant cost increase in building materials. The shoreline ordinance has been updated since that period so that now the setback is 75 feet. This is the setback that the Concept Plan used and to which the building would be constructed.

3. Question – How far east and west will you run the building?

Response: The east boundary will be the Division Street Bridge and it will extend west to the East-West Arbor, subject to the Design-Build Team design. A public access point would be built from the bridge to the building and site. Kevin Twohig added that improvements (both renewal and replacement) to the Centennial Trail (original 1974 construction) could extend to the Washington Street Bridge. The riverbank restoration, a bioengineered bank, would also be completed along the frontage, either in specific places or in total. Vegetation is not native and the degree of retention will depend on the plan developed by project landscape architect. Likely also that willows will be retained. The London Plane (sycamores) along the Trail will be retained. Vegetation between these trees and building will probably be altered and redone.

4. Question – When can comments be submitted?

Response – Any time between now and the submittal of the permit application, and even after the permit application. Even if not part of the record, the information would be provided to the Design Build team. The PFD website has a comment link to which input can be provided.

5. What is the timing for making the application?

Response – Environmental Checklist and Substantial Development permit would be submitted by the first of the year. This is a Type II permit. The City Plan Director would approve the permit that would likely be approved subject to conditions of approval, such as the design review for final building design and landscape plan, and riverbank restoration plan. Discuss JARPA permit and process that would also be completed pending landscape design for riverbank.

6. Regarding improvements to Centennial Trail, when discussed a year or so ago, there was question as to whether or not the PFD could pay for improvements to the Trail.

Response by Kevin Twohig- The PFD is working with members of the Park Board to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to allow the PFD to make Trail improvements and to undertake long-term maintenance.

7. Can space be provided for concessionaires or the ability to provide such space that could be used by concessionaires as needed? Would public bathrooms be provided?

Response by Kevin Twohig – The concept plan discusses having utilities in place and provide space so that the space would be available for such use.

Discussed pier shown in concept drawings. The pier won't be considered, but it may be possible to cantilever a platform over the stormwater outfall to provide visual access.

Note: Marion Moos, a member of the Citizens Opposing River Encroachment (CORE) which led to the designation of the public space on which the East-West Arbor is sited, was present at the Stakeholder meeting, but could not stay for the Community Meeting. Her comments are as follows: There should be a net gain in green space that would be restored and preserved in perpetuity. Retain donor plaques that acknowledge the CORE group. No asphalt driveways or walkways should intrude into this greenspace.