

Oregon Country Fair Path Planning Committee meeting Feb. 15, 2015

Members present: Kirk Shultz, Paxton Hoag, Jon Pincus, Susanna DeFazio, Jay Hogan, Dennis Todd, Tom Churchill, Colleen Bauman (Co-chair), Sylvia Fireman, Justin Honea (facilitating Co-chair), Dean Middleton, David Tipton. Staff: Charlie Ruff

Guests present: Ann Rogers, Indigo Ronlov, Diane Albino, Bear Pitts, Cathy Coulson-Keegan, Keith Herchberger, Jain Elliott, Amy Hand, Sue Theolass, Bill Wright, Heather Kent, Jack Meacham, Mouseman, Jill Liberty

After introductions, a motion to postpone approval of January minutes was unanimously approved.

The agenda was reviewed and unanimously approved as written, with Colleen making the motion and David seconding.

Staff reports:

Charlie: Thanks to Jay and the Naming Subcommittee for their efforts to winnow down the great list of name submissions for Crafts Lot. He said he's done with naming because the Board has twice been unable to agree on any of the submissions. For now, CL will be called "The New Area" until a new name is approved. CLOG (Crafts Lot Operations Group) is clicking along, working on selecting booths to move into The New Area (TNA), pretty much on track with food booths, with three anchor booths moving from older parts of the Fair. Taste trials are going on with applicants for four new food booths. Details will depend on how the puzzle shakes out. There could be up to five new food booths there. Backfill of vacated food booth spaces could be taken by former strolling vendors. The Bangkok Grill space could be a site for food carts, perhaps as a transition or one-year-only. Ring of Fire has been encouraged to re-apply. Some booths are looking for a change of venue and want to come to TNA. Gray water disposal is a problem at TNA, no sumps will be used.

Kirk: The deadline for CLOG art applications is today. Don't get discouraged if suggestions for TNA projects aren't accepted; space allocation is under review and consideration, with mostly one-year-only installations until more details get figured out.

Charlie: Mother Nature may throw us curves, and there's no telling what the river will do between now and the Fair. The Special Use Permit application is in Thom Lanfear's hands, and could be finalized in a few weeks.

Jon: What is the status of the dance pavilion programming?

Charlie: Sallie and Hilary are planning activities and stage programming, inviting dance groups to meet and talk. There will be a stakeholders' meeting April 12, including food and crafts booths, White Bird, dance stage, and Archaeology. Path Planning Committee members are invited.

Jay: The Piano Lounge (working title) is not really a piano lounge, more like a garden party at Grandma's, even though there will be a grand piano. It's not a performance venue, but the piano will be available for players. A piano steward will monitor the use of the instrument. Will have pillows, couches.

Justin: Ready to mail info to craft booth reps to coordinate development of TNA. There should be about 20 booths, most temporary and with a light footprint. All booths will have camping, even the temporary booths. The model is the Craft Casbah on Leslie Lane. Some vendors will move from the Figure 8. Wait-share and one-year-only will have an opportunity for sites. There are plenty of applicants, no plans for a call-out. In discussion with the Craft Committee. The deadline for crafters to respond is March 15, so everyone can be ready for the stakeholders' meeting on April 12. It's an exciting year. A lot of people are jurying in, with upwards of 380 applications last year.

Charlie: We did food booth call-out to old vendors and new. There are thirteen applicants for taste-testing. There is agreement that we want consistent presence of coffee places in the 8.

Justin: We're trying to identify people in the food community capable of that.

Kirk: Decongestion of the Figure 8 is part of the TNA development. We need a clear, open process and a couple of years for everything to shake out.

David: Thought the plan was to take a few years to place crafters in TNA.

Kirk: We're identifying congestion spots and we'll have to see how things play out. Is impatient but understands the complexity of options for moving.

David: Wants to participate only if his input is valuable. Frustrated by poor attendance at a subcommittee meeting. Thought there would be a few semi-permanent food booths in TNA and three years of revolving spaces for crafts booths.

Charlie: We might be able to clear one congestion spot in the Figure 8 this year. There's not a lot of eagerness among food booths to move. The key with TNA and the Figure 8 is to strike the right balance. There might be opportunities for new food booths.

Bill: If TNA develops too slowly, it won't attract enough public to the booths.

Kathy: It's important for vendors to be able to use the same site year after year so the public can find them.

Jon: Putting people in one spot and making it identifiable is traditional at OCF. Moving people around offers new interest.

David: One-year-only and wait-list vendors would be excited to join TNA and would be willing to move every year. Thought the space was for people who don't have a spot at all. People are excited at the possibilities.

Justin: If OCF builds the booths, vendors have less claim on specific sites than if they build the booths, allowing new opportunities and continuing excitement. OCF-built booths are easier to move into. Change would invigorate the Fair. Fleximum maxability is our goal.

Jay: Place is central to our tradition. Moving is hard. People at the Fair are remarkably territorial. We must remind people that they don't own their booths. Try not to move people around too much; try for continuity.

Board Liaison report.

Paxton: Thanks to the Naming Subcommittee, but the Board voted down all the suggested names and gave no direction. Expressed regret. Asked the subcommittee to continue working on names. Said the general consensus was that the names were not creative enough.

Colleen: If we do nothing but learn from this, it will be good.

Jay: Names matter. We need something to offer.

Tom: What will people on the radio use for TNA?

Indigo: How about "Land of Tribes" (LOT)?

Jay: Why is the Board involved in naming TNA?

Dennis: This is an example of why the Board shouldn't be involved in operations.

Charlie: There's no standard and nothing in the by-laws, but the Board wanted to be involved.

Colleen: We should recommend a process to the Board for name selection. Our role as a committee is to make recommendations to the Board.

Jon: TNA is bigger than Wally's Way, should have Board approval for a name.

David: The Board sets policy.

Diane: The PPC is a committee of the Board, not of Operations.

Jack: Suggests PPC should define criteria and standards for names.

Kirk: Names have evolved many ways; we need to define the process.

Indigo: There should be flexibility in naming process, which should be organic. A process can get us a little too rigid.

Paxton: PPC should make a process recommendation to the Board.

Colleen: A big area is harder to name. Let the Board do it. We need to know where we're going on this issue. Policy recommendations are on the agenda for the next meeting.

Kirk: Operations is calling it "The New Area" for this year.

Subcommittee reports.

(1) Community Village path proposal subcommittee:

David: Spent lots of time on the Community Village proposal. Suggested presenting a new map to booth holders to find out what people want and fear.

Diane: Where will CV be able to relocate the quiet area and structures displaced by the new path?

Keith: The new path is sellable to CV. He overcame his initial opposition. Getting CV to shift structures and functions will need help. One person in CV can stop it. Need an all-encompassing idea to engage all parties. CV needs to develop a new paradigm, a new way of looking at things.

Kirk: We can help, but CV needs to commit to the idea before we do a lot of labor-intensive design work. They could say, "We don't have all the answers but we're willing to move forward."

David: If CV can "claim the territory" and make a decision, we could work with them to develop the details.

Jon: Cul-de-sacs may be appropriate for educational presentations. The enclosed space has benefitted CV. Relief of congestion on East 13th is important and we should continue developing the plaza even if CV doesn't go for the new path.

David: The new CV path would not funnel people off East 13th.

Ann: CV is an archaeological site. CV may not understand that relocating fences would be necessary.

Justin: Appreciates the subcommittee's report and David's work. Glad that CV is actively involved. All these problems are solvable. Today is a status report. Good traction in communications with CV. If we get a go-no go decision from CV, we can make progress.

Sue: There's more excitement than negativity in CV. How big does the path have to be? (Kirk: 12 feet minimum.)

Colleen: Is there a process and a deadline for CV to make a decision?

David (to Keith): Do you need an extension on a decision deadline?

Keith: Yes, it must be organic or it won't work.

(2) Story Pole subcommittee.

Tom: A request for proposals was sent out for bid at the end of January or early February for archaeological investigation of the story pole location. The deadline for response is the end of February. Inspection might not affect the whole area. Archaeologists should be working by March. George has still not submitted stamped engineering plans, even though they were prepared by OCF volunteer Tim Wolden.

(3) Upper River Loop subcommittee.

Bear: We have new LIDAR mapping data to work with, including vegetation maps showing the canopy and details of the river. Hopes to have a plan proposal for next month's PPC meeting.

Kirk: Will we have a URL map to work on next month? Before our next meeting?

Old Business.

(1) Sound policy discussion.

Paxton: Proposals for an amplified stage on Sesame Street should come to the PPC.

Susanna: Sound is important because amplified sound has changed the energy of the Fair. Acoustic venue opportunities are reduced. Acoustic music circles are mostly gone. It happened without consensus. The Board should set policy on amplified sound. Amplified music might be OK outside the loops.

Sue: The idea of amplified sound at Sesame Street hasn't gone through appropriate channels--it was sent to the Board, not PPC.

Justin: Amplification has grown organically without appropriate process. Zoning might help. PPC should weigh in with the Board. The process needs openness and clarity. Enforcement is as important as making rules but challenging.

Kirk: Supports developing a policy to curb the expansion of electronic amplification. The current "stage" at Sesame Street is not a real stage but is a good area for ambient musicians.

Indigo: We need to respect our neighbors. Many years ago she and Chewie prodded the Board to develop a policy on sound. A task force was charged with investigating the issue to see how different needs could be met. The task force did not do its job. The current permit process is working to some degree, with good compliance. The BUMs have to do a lot of work on this issue. Zoning, soundscaping are coming up. There should be a

dedicated team to manage the program. Policy should emerge from Fair-wide collaboration. The PPC could help the Board organize and hold workshops on sound.

Jon: What we're working with now is calendar-based. We need to come up with a plan that is geographic.

Bill: The permitting process authorized powerful amplifiers that affect neighborhoods around de facto stages.

David: Excited about this discussion. Subcommittee discussed zones, holding a workshop on sound. Wants options. It's controversial, hot topic.

Heather: Amplified sound is an invasive species. Not everyone's wants should be met. Don't move amplified sound out to the edges of the Fair because it would affect neighbors.

Kathy: If there's a summit, invite Crafts Committee. The dance stage could be amplified 24 hours a day.

Ann: The Upper River Loop is still dark, but the surrounding sound is overwhelming.

Paxton: We need to zone the Fair for sound. Is collecting information.

Justin: Moved that PPC assist Board to hold a work session to develop ideas and improve OCF sound policy. Jon seconded.

David: Similar to our design charettes. Should we ask the Board to move on this?

Susanna: Doesn't want another Fair without a sound policy. Wants a time line. The Board has kept tabling discussion of sound. We need to press forward with a recommendation to the Board.

Indigo: The Board is waiting for Chewie to return to duty before discussing sound.

Kirk: Doesn't see this happening right away. There may be some relief for certain neighborhoods by BUM intervention. We should suggest a date, perhaps during June, when Main Camp is open. The Board has lots on its plate.

Jay: We need something this year, but it's been a problem for many years.

Indigo: Would May work for a sound workshop? How about May 17 in conjunction with the PPC meeting?

Amendment to motion proposed: Hold workshop on May 17. Justin and Jon: OK with amendment. Amended motion passed unanimously.

Paxton: Will bring this up at the Board/BUM retreat.

Amy: Aesthetics Subcommittee incorporates sound issues into its work plan. Aesthetics includes visuals and lighting. A written subcommittee report was submitted earlier.

David: The metal on the Dragon created lots of controversy. Night lighting is also on the agenda of the subcommittee.

(2) Bangkok Grill's former location.

Kirk: The space provides opportunities for carts or a tea garden and incorporation into Altared Space.

Indigo: A snow cone vendor was across the path last year from Altared Space, causing congestion. There was a metal lotus/fire pit last year, wants to bring it back into the old BG space. A donation-based tea house would be a good use, with donations going to Culture Jam.

Justin: The snow cone vendor is moving this year.

Sue: Opposed to donation tea house.

Colleen: Is there an equally good space for a sacred fire in TNA?

Justin: The fire needs a place. We need some food vendors on the river path.

Kirk: We need to address this site at our March meeting--and the Upper River Loop, too. March 15 at 11 AM at the site. Fire in TNA was rejected by CLOG; the river's edge can be an opportunity. It may be time to re-think the old log known as the Wally Bench.

Jon: Likes the tea house idea. Wants to keep Wally Bench.

Ann: We would have to deal with gray water if we have food carts there.

Jay: There is a magical tree in the old BG space.

Paxton: Prayer flags could mark the path near Altared Space.

Homework review.

Subcommittees: CV, story pole, sound/aesthetics, Altared Space, Upper River Loop, names.

Meeting evaluation: Thumbs up. One participant said she wasn't seen when she raised her hand to speak. Thanks to Colleen for keeping us on time. Thanks to all who participated.

Adjourn