

MEETING MINUTES / 6 PAGES

Project: City Arch River 2015, MVVA #10001
Meeting Date: April 12, 2011
Meeting Purpose: **National Park Service (NPS) Meeting – Design Discussion #4**
Distribution Date: April 29, 2011
Prepared by: James Smith, Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc. (MVVA)

Participants:	Title:	Affiliation:
Tom Bradley	Superintendent	JNEM, NPS
Ann Honious	Chief of Museum Services and Interpretation	JNEM, NPS
Ed Dodds	Chief of Facility Maintenance	JNEM, NPS
Jim Jackson	Law Enforcement Specialist	JNEM, NPS
Frank Mares	Deputy Superintendent	JNEM, NPS
Bob Moore	Historian	JNEM, NPS
Larry Sandarciero	Administrative Officer	JNEM, NPS
Randy Biallas	Assistant Director, Park Cultural Resources Program	NPS
Al O'Bright	Historical Architect	NPS
Marla McEnaney	Historical Landscape Architect	NPS
Don Stevens	Senior Historian	NPS (via GoTo)
Judith Deel	Archeologist	MO SHPO
Mark Miles	Director	MO SHPO (via GoTo)
Kris Zapalac	Historic Preservation Specialist	MO SHPO
Jenny Nixon	Senior Vice President	Bi-State/Metro
Justin Struttman	Director of Operations, Gateway Arch Riverfront	Bi-State/Metro
Chris Poehler	Senior Vice President – Engineering	METRO
David Grove	Executive Director / CEO	JNPA
Jennifer Sandy	Program Officer, Midwest Office	NTHP (via GoTo)
Ann Chance	Director of Special Events	St. Louis City
Stephen Gregali	Mayor's Office	St. Louis City
Susan Trautman	Executive Director	Great Rivers Greenway
John Clark	President	Laclede's Landing Redevelopment
Gullivar Shepard	Senior Associate	MVVA
James Smith	Associate	MVVA
Chris Donohue	Senior Project Manager	MVVA
Beth Meyer	Historical Landscape Architect	UVA (w/ MVVA)
Gina Hillberry	Partner	CHA (w/ MVVA)
Tim Dekker	Senior Manager	LimnoTech (w/ MVVA)
Randy Vogel	Principal	AES (w/ MVVA)
Doug Mensing	Senior Ecologist	AES (w/ MVVA)

Distribution: All Participants

Meeting Location: METRO Board Room
707 North First Street, 6th Floor
St. Louis, MO 63101

Meeting Time: 9:30am-1:30pm

GENERAL

The purpose of the meeting was to conduct Design Discussion #4 with the focus being on the design of the Historical Landscape and the North Gateway.

DISCUSSION

A. Review Procedure

1. MVVA will provide PDFs & printouts of presented material as the basis for formal comments to the design team.
2. MVVA will take & circulate meeting minutes for review and comment.
3. Each reviewing agency will be responsible for submitting comments within two weeks of each review.
4. It is anticipated that new issues may arise regarding topics reviewed previously. MVVA encourages reviewers to draw in relevant considerations from prior Design Discussions.

B. Historic Landscape

1. MVVA identified the goals of the Historic Landscape project, that MVVA's role at JNEM was to restore some of the original Kiley/Saarinen design intent that were either unrealized, or needed some level of tweaking to help them to function ecologically, as well as providing universal access to various features of the memorial. The memorial is to be read as a Kiley/Saarinen landscape when complete, not the work of MVVA.
2. Beth Meyer described MVVA's approach to the Historic Landscape project, highlighting areas of the site that are considered to be Contributing Landscape Features – areas that will be preserved, and remain unchanged.
3. MVVA and Beth Meyer highlighted the fundamental difference between the Kiley/Saarinen concepts for spatial organization of the memorial grounds and the existing conditions, comparing canopy plans of each. The 1964-66 accepted plan shows a clear intent for areas of density, creating a sense of compression and release experienced within the alleés, an idea that was not realized and an experience missing from the grounds today.
4. MVVA discussed some ideas for preservation of the historic alleés, including tree species, removal of tree grates, and replacing the soil to promote tree growth. As the current scope for the 2015 project may not include work on the alleés specifically, these are to be considered as strategies for future work, but work that MVVA would like to push forward through the NEPA process so implementation can occur is funding becomes available.
5. Reviewers commented on the process of exchanging the trees and soil, noting the need to remove and replace the historic walks. MVVA explained the vision for how this would take place, using a trusted exposed aggregate the firm has worked with on many past projects to facilitate this part of the project. This company, though based in Massachusetts, would act in an advisory role to the contractor completing the concrete work in St. Louis.
6. Beth Meyer described the original intent for the memorial, showing the spatial organization of the site as a series of planted form typologies as designed by Kiley and Saarinen in the 1964-66 plan. Each typology was designed to play a different role in the spatial sequence and formal experience of the memorial.

7. MVVA presented a series of tree canopy plans highlighting each of the planted form typologies, noting that the current site plan does not include the Forest Edge and Meadow typologies, but rather a homogenous distribution of trees and lawn within the pond and east bank landscapes. The final plan presented, MVVA's planting plan, was described as an interpretation of the Kiley/Saarinen concepts, re-introducing all the planted form typologies, but to fit the existing topography, and in a way that would allow the ground plane to function more successfully as lower maintenance, sustainable landscape.
8. MVVA identified soil structure across the site to be a major factor in erosion problems that are damaging the ponds. Though an overall strategy for soils has not yet been developed, the issue is one that we will consider when establishing new plant communities.
9. The ground plane was presented as a strategy for enhancing the formal typologies developed in the tree planting plan. Four typologies – mown lawn, upland meadow, woodland meadow, and wet meadow, were developed to create a range in experience, while maintaining the ideas of the original design intent and significantly improving the biophysical health of the site.
10. Reviewers commented on the ground plane proposal, wondering if the variation in ground plane was in line with the original Kiley intent. MVVA identified Kiley's use of the term Meadow to describe one of the planted form typologies – a concept that was unrealized during construction. MVVA also has some renderings from The Office of Dan Kiley to support this concept, though specifics of materiality were not explicitly detailed in Kiley's plans.
11. Reviewers asked about maintenance for the various ground plane planting types, stating that the mown lawn covering the Arch grounds currently requires very little physical labor to maintain. MVVA responded by clarifying that though the meadows in the 2015 proposal will require a different set of skills and maintenance regimes to establish, in the long run maintenance costs and services could be significantly reduced.
12. Reviewers commented on the introduction of a meadow typology, asking if in MVVA's experience we had seen these succeed in an urban environment, not just ecologically, but specifically if people were drawn to these types of landscapes. MVVA cited examples in London, as well as Storm King Art Center in New York, where these gradients of turf and forbs were extremely successful in both aspects, and will provide additional photos of meadows of different heights activated by people.
13. MVVA presented the proposal's approach to increased accessibility throughout the site, introducing additional paths to the pond landscapes and down to the Riverfront, all branching off the Historic Walks. All new paths are to be ADA compliant and considered compatible with the original design intent and materiality of the existing landscape. Mown paths are also being considered additional circulation routes throughout the proposed meadows. These will not necessarily be ADA compliant, but will require little to no topographic alterations.
14. MVVA illustrated the concept for any and all adjustments made to the topography of the pond landscapes to accommodate ADA compliant paths, showing the areas of change in plan, as well as section. The paths have been graded into the existing topography in such a way that the overall look of the landforms remains the same and no walls or abrupt changes in slope will be needed to fit the new paths.
15. Reviewers questioned the detail of the pond access paths as presented. It is agreed that it is necessary to detail them in such a way that runoff from uphill of the paths does not sheet right over the path, but the additional stone sett swale seems over designed. The group wondered if there was a solution that did not add what they initially saw as a designed element to the pond landscapes.
16. Tim Dekker, Randy Vogel, and Doug Mensing (MVVA subconsultants) presented overall strategies and some details for site hydrology, stormwater management, and rethinking the function of the

ponds. The proposal for the pond landscapes is aimed at creating a much healthier site than its current condition, one where overall irrigation is reduced 40% and new hydrologic cycles allow for much of the irrigation water required to come from recycled stormwater on site.

17. An idea for the treatment of the pond edge was also presented to illustrate the team's strategy for mitigating algae growth in the ponds. This strategy would prevent runoff water from flowing over the walls, carrying with it fertilizers and organic matter that develop into algal blooms.
18. Reviewers commented on the introduction of wet meadows, wondering if this would also significantly increase biodiversity of fauna on the Arch Grounds. AES confirmed that it would likely increase wild bird populations, as well as select insects.
19. Tim Dekker described the overall hydrology strategy as a way to reduce maintenance to the Reflecting Ponds, stating that the process of emptying and cleaning the ponds would not necessarily be completely eliminated from the NPS's maintenance regimes, but that the frequency would be significantly diminished.

C. North Gateway

MVVA presented the North Gateway in three contexts: traffic and circulation, site design within the Arch grounds and Family Fun Festival programming.

Traffic / Circulation

1. The North Gateway area is a critical edge to the project as it is linked to the Washington Ave Developments, Laclede's Landing, the Casino and changes in ramps of I-70. These all lead to the North Gateway edge "becoming more the center" in terms of circulation of traffic and visitors.
2. The major pieces of traffic and parking planning relevant to the North Gateway include:
 - a. The reversal of the ramps on I-70 between Pine and Washington Ave. This will allow northbound traffic to exit I-70 onto Memorial Drive just before Washington Avenue. And city traffic can enter I-70 southbound on the south side of Washington Ave.
 - b. The 5 leg intersection of Washington Ave and Memorial Drive is currently ill-equipped for general traffic and especially so for event management. A new four leg signalized intersection is proposed with the removal of the section of Washington Ave on NPS grounds.
 - c. The garage on the Arch Grounds is removed in conjunction with the removal of the Washington avenue spur, and the existing parking capacity and/or new development of parking outside of the Park is being explored as a means to meet parking needs.
 - d. North 3rd street is proposed to extend from Memorial Drive through the new Washington Ave intersection and connect through the western edge of Laclede's landing and to the Casino. The idea is to allow 3rd Street to function as the "Front Door" for Laclede's Landing and Casino with potential for taxi stands and drop-off areas. 3rd Street connection will also allow MLK Bridge to function similarly to the Eads Bridge for traffic during events.
 - e. While North 3rd Street, Carr Street, Leonor K Sullivan Boulevard and Laclede's Landing Boulevard provide higher capacity edge traffic, within Laclede's Landing 1st and 2nd Streets and a roadway connection between the two at the Eads Bridge will serve as an internal loop for slower traffic and service vehicles.
 - f. During events which include closure of streets within Laclede's Landing, 3rd Street would serve as the route for directing traffic north of the Landing for entry at Carr Street and Cass Street or the new access to I-70 with the Mississippi River Bridge
3. Reviewer comments on traffic and parking planning:
 - a. Reviewers asked about the service connector between 1st and 2nd Streets and indicated that this is currently private property. MVVA responded that this idea was developed in order to "stitch" the street network together at this location. This idea would require further negotiation with the owner and City Streets .

- b. Reviewers asked if Lucas connection between 3rd Street and 2nd is included. MVVA indicated that it was not currently shown due to difficulties in negotiation, but that it is a desirable opportunity to pursue.
 - c. Reviewers expressed concern that the “wishes and wants” of changes to 3rd Street become more tangible as soon as possible. MVVA responded that the modeling of these traffic changes are to be ready for review Mid-May in workshops with City Streets and MoDOT / FHWA. The Design team has been and will continue working with City Streets on this planning. NPS stated that the timeline on the planning for traffic and parking is very aggressive and asked METRO and Laclede’s Landing Redevelopment (LLR) for guidance on how to best address their concerns. LLR & METRO requested a “stake in the ground” decision point as soon as possible in order to allow for stakeholders to have some confidence in traffic / parking plans and to plan accordingly themselves.
 - d. Reviewers asked if options for keeping JNEM Garage had been considered. MVVA responded that a series of keeping and partially keeping the garage had been considered and that it had proven difficult for both layout and cost reasons to justify preserving the garage in part or whole. MVVA responded that the series of garage studies could be included as a follow-up for the group.
4. Pedestrian circulation improvements include:
- a. Improved access from Washington Avenue at the new 4 leg intersection into the Arch Grounds and Laclede’s landing.
 - b. Improved pedestrian connection between Laclede’s Landing and the Arch Grounds through the Eads bridges arches. These connections extend through the North Gateway landscape to the Arch grounds allee paths.
 - c. Improved connection of the Metro stop at Eads Bridge / 2nd Street with the Arch grounds.
 - d. The design of a circulation “spine” through the North Gateway landscape allows ADA accessible pedestrian passage from Washington Avenue down to Leonor K Sullivan and also provides a safe route for bicycles and the “Circulator.” This solution addresses concerns about bike paths and the “Circulator” being accommodated on Laclede’s Landing streets.

Site Design

1. MVVA presented a site design within the Arch grounds which includes a new central path or “spine” through the North Gateway that connects Leonor K Sullivan to Memorial and is accessible and wide enough to carry bicycle and the circulator traffic in addition to pedestrian traffic. Paths from the 1st and 2nd Streets through the Eads bridge archways are also accessible and connect into the Arch Grounds. The 1st street path bridges over the central path.
2. A central lawn area within the landscape is designed to accommodate passive and event program.
3. The Park ranger security offices currently located in the garage facility are now located at the Memorial drive / western end of the central path. The facility is designed to provide access at 2 levels, vehicular access at the level of 2nd Street and a publicly accessible structure at the level of Memorial, which provides “visual purchase” of the facility looking over the North Gateway and Arch grounds.
4. At the Leonor K Sullivan end of the central path the landscape is manipulated to create an “Explorer Garden” with small paths and landscape materials of a fun and interpretative nature and areas which will address local stormwater handling and provide variety and texture in the planting.
5. Reviewers expressed concern about elevation changes at the south face of Eads Bridge. There should be no grade changes that affect where grade meets existing masonry lines. MVVA responded that this was understood and that further study would resolve any grading issues that would impact the Eads bridge.

Family Fun Festival

1. Ed Uhlir presented his work on the Family Fun Festival in Millennium Park in Chicago. The presentation included the programming of events, sponsorship, funding and operations needs.
 2. NPS asked about staffing and marketing. Ed responded that the Millennium Park project has 2 dedicated staff year round and 6-8 summer interns. Marketing is by website, word-of-mouth and brochure.
 3. Reviewers asked about the location for a Family Fun Festival within this project. Ed responded that North Gateway is ideal as it is out of the flood zone of the riverfront and because Kiener and other areas are too small for a Festival tent.
 4. Reviewers asked about location for tent in North Gateway. MVVA responded that it would fit parallel to Eads Bridge at north end of event lawn. The Eads Bridge would serve as a “backdrop” for the tent and there would still be circulation and access around all four sides of the tent. Ed also stated that a smaller rental tent (not as large as Millennium tent) would be suitable for North Gateway.
 5. Reviewers asked what kind of storage needs should be anticipated for Festival tent. Ed responded that the tent is self-contained during the season and can be stored elsewhere during off-season. MVVA responded that the proposed ranger station below grade level may be considered for storage.
 6. Storage within the Eads Bridge was discussed but the group concurred that no penetrations or use of the bridge structure would be considered by SHPO.
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ACTION ITEMS

1. *MVVA to provide additional documentation of meadow examples as precedents for Historic Landscape.*
2. *Design team to investigate alternatives to stone sett swales at paths.*
3. *Design team and Client will pursue resolutions of traffic circulation, parking and event management. Traffic modeling and negotiation with City and stakeholders will continue in order to arrive at resolutions in regards these matters.*
4. *MVVA to document options considered for keeping or partially keeping existing parking garage.*
5. *NPS/Metro to provide documentation of Eads Bridge that may help identify top of granite coursing.*
6. *MVVA recognizes requirement to maintain existing grade at south face of Eads Bridge, and will refine grading in design.*