

## **Berkley Riverfront Park Master Plan February Public Meetings Summary**

The second round of Public meetings were held Wednesday, February 8, 2006 at Southtown Council (6814 Troost) from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Thursday February 9, 2006 at Northland Neighborhood Incorporated offices (5312 Chouteau Trafficway) for residents living north of the river. The purpose was to present site analysis and design principles that resulted from the public input at the first two meetings, to obtain feedback on the design principles, and to identify issues that had not previously been addressed about existing park conditions and desired improvements. Approximately 60 community residents attended the meetings. Also in attendance were City Staff and Council representatives as well as Port Authority Board members.

Each meeting opened with an introduction from the Port Authority (Linda Ward), the introduction of Atelier Dreiseitl as members of the Consultant Team, and a presentation by the Consultant Team recapping the issues raised at the first two meetings and outlining a set of design principles for the Berkley Park Master Plan. After the presentation, meeting participants were divided into small groups to discuss the design principles. The discussion was guided by five general questions. The comments collected from each group were noted on flip charts. Findings for both meetings have been consolidated and are summarized below.

### **Design Principles**

1. Berkley Park is THE place where Downtowners, Northlanders, Southlanders, and others can come together on the river.
  2. Berkley Park is part of Columbus Park, River Market, Downtown and Kansas City.
  3. River banks should be connected together, accessible to people and boats, and part of the park.
  4. The River is part of the park therefore the park and surrounding development should be environmentally responsive.
  5. The park should express the natural life of the river and cultural heritage of the city.
- **Do you generally agree with the 6 proposed principles?**
    - Yes. Issues included:
      - ✓ Add **VISITORS** to first principle
      - ✓ Connectivity – accessibility of the park
      - ✓ Safety issues with accessing the river
  - **Based on what you have seen, can you conceive of a park without parking in it?**
    - Majority answered yes. Issues included:
      - ✓ ADA accessibility – proximity of parking to the park
      - ✓ Parking on a major street could serve as a buffer between the park and the neighborhood
      - ✓ Small scattered lots serving various areas of the park are preferable to vast lots that are regularly empty
      - ✓ Shuttles are a possible consideration
      - ✓ Mass transit access is needed
      - ✓ Parking in neighborhoods, on local streets, and weekend use of office structured parking won't work for events
      - ✓ Boat parking/tie-up is desirable

- **Some have asked in previous meetings to increase the size of the park from 17 acres to 25. In this meeting, we have recommended to increase the park size by adding:**
  - a. **The land between the edge of sidewalk to the edge of water**
  - b. **The north bank, and**
  - c. **The connection west to the Town of Kansas**

**By doing this we would have well over 30 acres of park land. Is this desirable? Have we reached our goal in park size?**

  - Majority answered yes. Issues included:
    - ✓ Cost
    - ✓ Land acquisition/jurisdiction
    - ✓ Feasibility of working with Army Corps of Engineers to restructure levee
    - ✓ A few said that the park should still be expanded south (into the proposed development area) for the park to be made 'usable'.
  
- **Building an access to the water from where the sidewalk is now will be expensive. If you had one dollar to spend on building the whole park, how much would you spend on getting to the water?**
  - The majority was willing to spend at least \$0.50 to access the water. Issues included:
    - ✓ Feasibility of working with Army Corps of Engineers to restructure levee
    - ✓ Safety of the access – the river is dangerous
    - ✓ Marina would be better at KC Riverfront Park (downstream of Berkley Park) – but tie ups would be good at Berkley
    - ✓ Bring water into the park – water features
  
- **What should be the relative emphasis between Passive space (sitting, strolling, people watching, picnicking), Active space (open fields for such things as kick ball, Frisbee, etc), and Events? If you cut a pie in three pieces representing these types of spaces, how big would each piece be?**
  - The majority expressed an interest in an even, balanced mix of uses in flexible spaces. There appeared to be a dominant order of priority: (1) Passive Uses (2) Active Uses, and (3) Events – Though one out of the six break-out groups put Events first and Passive Uses second. Issues included:
    - ✓ Events shouldn't dominate the park
    - ✓ Flexibility to do a variety of things in the park
    - ✓ Need facilities (i.e. restrooms) and utilities to support use and events
  
- **Other Questions/Comments**
  - How can this park be both a regional and a neighborhood park?
  - Moving the River Front Drive traffic to the south edge of the development will create a barrier to the rest of the city.
  - Do the neighbors (Columbus Park or new development) want connectivity?
  - How will the development and the park be funded?
  - What is the project timeline for the development? The park?
  - What scale, type, and price range will the development be?
  - Riverfest is free – it gets revenue from parking.
  - Bring water into the park – water features
  - Park needs strong connections to the rest of the city
  - Activities, attractions – Aquarium, Steam Boat Arabia, Town of Kansas, educational opportunities