Meeting Date: 9/26/2017
Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Location: Garden Place Elementary Library, 4425 Lincoln St., Denver
Subject: Meeting Seven Notes

Steering Committee Meeting Attendees:
Community Members: John Zapien, A.E., Armando Payan, Katie McKenna, Vernon Hill, Maria Duran (absent), Yessika Gonzales (absent), Rosa Gaytan (absent), Ray Ruppert, Maria Campos (absent), Nola Miguel (absent)
Greenway Foundation: Jeff Shoemaker (absent) and Rachel Steel
Audubon Society of Greater Denver: Polly Reetz (absent)
The Nature Conservancy: Suzanne White, Erina Keefe, one other (absent)
Adams County: Shannon McDowell (absent)
National Western Center: Liz Adams (CRL Associates)
CSU: Jocelyn Hittle (absent)
Mickey Zeppelin
City of Denver: Denver Parks and Recreation (Cincere Eades – Project Manager), Sarah Anderson (Public Works Policy & Planning) Chelsea Jander (DPR Intern), Sloane Nystrom (NDCC, DPR)
North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative (Tim Sandos, Michael Sapp), Department of Environmental Health (Andrew Ross)
Consultant Team: Dig Studio (Gretchen Wilson, Laurel Raines, Adam Pridgen, Erica Herrin); Zoeller Consulting (Lisa Zoeller, Nora Neureiter)

Meeting started late at around 5:45. Please arrive at 5:30 at future meetings so that we can cover the planned information and end the meeting at an earlier time.

1. Welcome by Cincere and overview of meeting agenda.
2. Three Draft Alternatives Survey results – Gretchen Wilson presented the results of the survey and shared which of the three themes was ranked highest. The theme of Ecology, Arts, & Culture ranked highest and is the basis for planning the overall experience at the park. Gretchen continued to review the rest of the survey results.
3. Gretchen then presented the draft final plan, with layer diagrams.
4. Cincere invited members to comment.
5. Comments/Questions:
   a. Mickey: Could the pond and water edge be accessible? What is being added to the park in terms of usability that isn’t already there? Could the lake be remediated?
   b. Cincere introduced Andrew Ross from DEH to dive into specifics about the pond water quality, sediment quality, and remediation.
c. Andrew: Heavy metals are present in the sediment at bottom of pond. In 1993, the EPA and the City of Denver came to an agreement with ASARCO (prior to bankruptcy), that required a minimum 10'-0" depth of water in the pond. Currently there is only 1'-4' of water depth throughout the pond. It is unclear why the pond wasn’t dredged as required by the EPA Record of Decision (ROD). DEH is investigating the history, who is responsible, and performing continued site testing. The city is investing $100,000 into site research including taking samples of pond sediment to analyze how to remediate the pond.

d. Mickey: Can the pond be lined/ capped?

e. Cincere/Andrew: The City is looking at multiple options for remediation and making the pond safe/accessible. Lining the pond is an option that is being explored. Any remediation plans that deviate from the original 1993 Record of Decision would have to be reviewed and approved by the EPA.

f. Mickey: Would it be possible to ride a horse on the site? Could we plan for a barn onsite? Could there be a connection between Heron Pond and National Western? Allowing equestrian access could be an iconic element of this park and a special connection to the area’s past.

g. Cincere: Horses are not allowed in City parks currently. If we were to make an exception and allow horses, we would have to make sure that they don’t interfere with the water quality area or other park uses.

h. John: Community needs a strong voice about what happens at Heron Pond because they invested $1 million to restore Heller Open Space. John would like to maintain flexibility in Master Plan to allow for change/alterations in the future even if those uses are currently ‘not allowed’. The community wants to determine what should be created onsite – not National Western or the City.

i. Cincere: Remember, this plan is a framework. We will continue to work with the community as we refine the design.

j. A.E.: Would like to see horses in the park. Anything that can be done to bring back natural habitat should be made a priority in the Master Plan. The fact that the site is to be named a nature preserve is something to be proud of. The City needs to assign responsibility for not dredging pond before the ASARCO bankruptcy.

k. Andrew Ross: The city is looking to see if it will be possible to get funding from the ASARCO bankruptcy trust to pay for the pond dredging.

l. Mickey: Globeville needs a community space. What makes Heron Pond a regional attraction? Are the athletic fields located in the best space? Could they be moved? Could we put a community center or a school on the land? Can we shrink the water quality area to get more community use space/

m. Cincere: Reviewed restrictions for land use – schools are not permitted on public park land. Other conservation and land use restrictions exist that have been covered in past meetings and during a site visit with Mickey.

n. A.E.: Should have nature immersion events in park. Doesn’t like straight lines of trees, would like to see only random order/natural looking groups of trees. Male Ginkgo biloba trees should be planted in park. The park is great for water sciences and there should be a research
partnership with CSU students. No hard/ concrete edges, more naturalistic, hard edges
dangerous for children. The park should be a place for physical comfort.

o. John: Make the water quality area as large as possible. Highlight adjacency to National
Western and new CSU facility, park can become living laboratory. Don’t sell any parcels off
to developers, the park land belongs to the community. Create a public committee to
determine the use of the parcels.

p. Vern: When will Army Corps study be done? Does the plan coincide with the Army Corps
study?

q. Cincere: Study will be made available early next spring. Army Corps study slowed by the
Mayor to allow for development of the Heron Pond Master Plan effort. Cincere is working
with the Army Corps to coordinate plans. For example, Cincere has overlaid the Army Corps
draft plan on the Heron Pond plan for the riverfront to prevent any significant conflicts
between the two.

r. A.E.: The Army Corps of Engineers should come out and talk to the community when the
report is ready.

s. Vern: Expressed concern that there is not enough parking to accommodate a large assembly
of people.

 t. Mickey: Be specific about a built structure for Community Center or Nature Center, or
Fitness Center. Mickey would like to continue exploring the possibility of affordable housing
on the site.

u. Rachel: Heron Pond needs something really special in northern area to draw people into
natural zones to keep eyes on the park and prevent transients from moving in. When all the
program is focused on the manicured areas of the park, activity stays concentrated in those
areas making the natural areas less populated and safe. Rachel asked the group to consider if
the overlook will be a big enough draw to bring people to the natural areas? Rachel asked
attendees to consider planning regularly programmed activity in the space. She noted that it is
important to be inclusive early on and to make connections between the park and community
(like nearby schools) to build sense of pride and ownership.

v. John: Need to get people invested & take ownership of the park. Have schools partner to have
kids come plant trees. Engage the community.

w. Tim: Very close, have everything there in the plan. Going in the right direction. Encouraged
community members to write down and share design feedback and ideas.

x. AE: reminded the Steering Committee that this draft plan reflects three years of ideas and
input.

6. Cincere thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and reminded attendees to come out for
the public meeting in the park on October 7th.

End of Meeting