

# **Spring Street – Free Street Streetscape Plan Public Advisory Committee Meeting 1 Summary**

September 13, 2012 – 4:00-5:30  
Portland City Hall, Room 24

## **Proposed Schedule**

Thursday 10/11 Committee Meeting #2, 4pm. 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor City Hall, City Council Chambers  
Date ? - Meeting 3 – Preliminary Findings PAC Meeting  
Date ? - Meeting 4 – Public Meeting  
Date ? - Meeting 5 – Final PAC Meeting

## **Summary**

The Spring Street – Free Street streetscape plan was introduced to committee members by the Planning Division Director Alex Jaegerman, and Senior Planner Rick Knowland. Tom Farmer, a Landscape Architect with Ransom Engineering, introduced existing conditions of the streetscape as well as a few amenities in need of initial review. Designs for street lamps, trash receptacles, and benches were suggested for review. The committee decided to postpone the review of trash receptacles and benches until further consideration of the overall site plan. The street lamp style selected at this meeting was an LED version of a street lamp style already installed in the downtown area for the sake of continuity. Additional views of Spring Street were requested for easier review.

## **Overall Goals for Spring Street Discussed**

- Consider the Spring Street renovation as a model for the future of Portland streetscapes and consider future Spring Street growth/change.
- Focus on big picture and develop guiding principles before delving into amenity details. Consider rewriting the Spring Street purpose.
- Aim to be congruent with Civic Center renovations. The two-way, single lane access during the renovation of the Civic Center may be a good predictor of functionality of a reduction in lanes.

## **Factors to Consider and Prioritize**

Spring Street has been identified as an MDOT paving project and funding will be contributed with this distinction in mind.

### **Relationship To Other Streets**

Intersecting streets within the scope of the project include **High Street, Oak Street, Pleasant Street, South Street, Center Street** and **Temple Street**. Intersections involved are the **intersection** at High St. – Spring St., and the intersection where Spring St. becomes Middle St.

Spring Street's relationship to residential streets (eg. South Street) and any impact the renovation would have on these streets was brought to the Committee's attention.

JB will contact **PACTS** for a **pedestrian count** to understand circulation patterns and the potential to redirect pedestrian traffic from other streets to this section of Spring Street.

There was a suggestion of open **Oak Street** to Spring Street. **Pleasant Street Park** was suggested as a way through.

**South Street** needs a connection to Spring Street that allows pedestrians to pass through (people jump the fence), but does not promote *lingering* that would be undesirable for residents on this mixed use street.

We discussed the **bottlenecking** at the High Street and Middle Street intersections.

### **Transportation/Accessibility**

The Committee agreed to account for the needs of multiple modes of transportation including **vehicular** (commercial and personal), **pedestrian**, and **bicycle** traffic as well as **handicap accessibility**.

**Parking** needs must also be held into account. [high priority]

**Street finders** and **pedestrian signals** for clarity and flow were also briefly discussed.

**Snow removal** must be taken into account in the design of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian access. Removal will be conducted and taken into account just as Congress Street and other downtown streets.

We considered the addition of **pedestrian crossings or informal permeability** between sides of the street followed by a brief mention of a change in **speed limit**. A particular location of interest is by the Holiday Inn.

### **Civic Center**

The hardscape by the Civic Center will extend to the curb line. The façade will be an undifferentiated texture that may mute building's presence.

### **Districts**

There is a need to recognize that this section of street is a part of the **Brick District** of the City, and is surrounded **Historical District** streets and buildings.

### **Open Space** [high priority]

The opportunity to implement **linear parks** and to be conscious of possibilities for **green space, nodes** and built **opportunities to stop and linger** were considered to be a potentially positive feature. These features would be in an effort to **create an identity** for the street and have clear deference to pedestrians.

### Other Considerations/Concerns/Notices

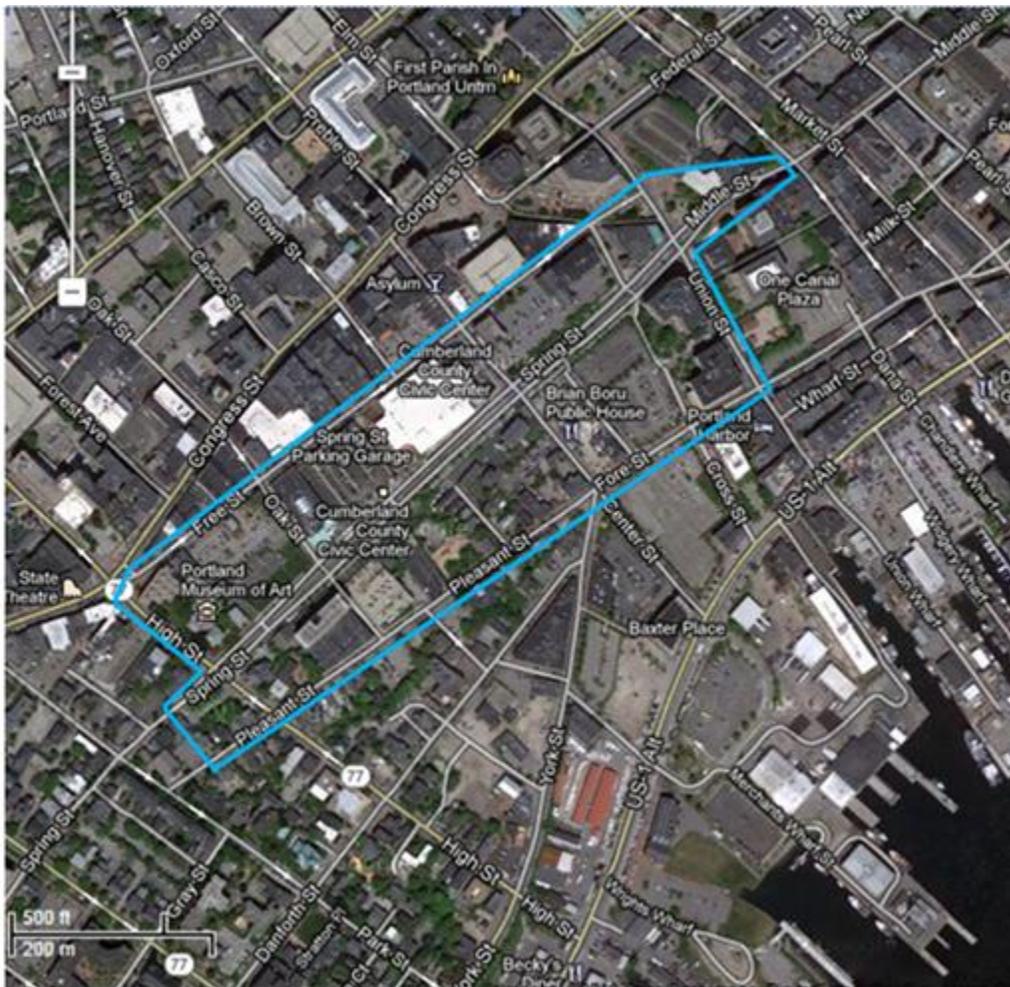
PSA is combining materials from the two Spring St charrettes. The Planning Office is putting together a **resource reading** list for committee members that will be available shortly.

**Woonerf** style streetscape was suggested.

**Light pollution** was an expressed concern. The LED street lamps are expected to sufficiently reduce light pollution and provide light to the streets.

**Ornamentation patterns in brick** sidewalks should be considered to either be congruous with surrounding streets or to give a particular identity.

Kristen Levesque offered some positive attributes of the site: open space, green space, and view of the water.



## **GOALS AND PRINCIPLES FOR FREE - SPRING STREET**

### **General Guiding Principles**

The design of Free - Spring Street should reflect a space that functions as a visual and physical connector to surrounding uses and streets not as a divider or barrier.

The Spring Street concrete barrier is recognized as an impediment in creating a comfortable urban pedestrian friendly street. A redesign of Spring Street should reflect the barriers removal as well as measures consistent with the project goals and principles.

Spring Street should be designed to provide a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment.

Spring Street should be re-integrated into the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods with a design concept that enhances the desired qualities and characteristics of the surrounding area.

Bridge the Spring Street divide with walkable safe and attractive connections between the Old Port and the Arts District, and between the Pleasant Street neighborhood and Downtown.

The Spring Street design should consider the entire width of the street right-of-way as a multi-use space in which pedestrians, vehicles, bicycles and open space are appropriately accommodated in achieving the project goals and principles.

Pedestrian circulation and open space should be designed to enhance and enliven pedestrian activity.

The design should consider future redevelopment opportunities of adjacent private property in designing circulation (pedestrian and vehicle) and open space.

Enhance the character of Free Street as a front door for infill development in a high quality urban space.

The Civic Center is an important community asset which can be accommodated and integrated within the surrounding neighborhood through careful design and engineering.

### **Specific Measures**

- Design improvements that increase pedestrian friendliness

- Provide on street parking
- Reduce vehicle speed
- Accommodate Civic Center logistics and access
- Remove Spring Street concrete median barrier
- Increase and improve pedestrian connections

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- Oak Street
- South Street
- Cotton Street
- Cross Street
- Enhance and cohere these connections with street trees, lighting, paving patterns, signage, and amenities.

- Improve crosswalks
- Provide better connectivity to the Pleasant Street neighborhood
- Replace worn out Free Street pedestrian infrastructure and amenities
- Support economic development of adjacent parcels
- Increase Open Space – Green Space
- Reduce Spring Street to 2-Lanes and reclaim the space as a linear park
  - Could be a new sculpture park
  - Examples are Commonwealth Ave Mall, Boston
  - PSA charrette concepts
- Provide a strong urban design identity with a high quality attractive amenity package