

**FAUNTLEROY WATERSHED COUNCIL**  
**Meeting #112, Nov. 9, 2023, on Zoom**

**ATTENDEES**

Watershed volunteers: Dennis Hinton (facilitator), Tracy Randel, Karen Farnsworth, Rosalie Miller, Kathy Mutchler, Chris Nack, Tom Trulin, and Judy Pickens (scribe)

Fauntleroy Church: Phil Sweetland

**1. Introductions**

**2. September minutes**

Approved as distributed.

**3. Financial reports**

Dennis reported \$860.93 in our checking account at Washington Federal after purchasing a box of all-weather paper. Judy reported a balance of \$17,034.45 in our stewardship fund with EarthCorps.

**4. Seattle Parks**

New district crew chief Jesse Bonn could not be in attendance but is very much on the job.

**5. Fauntleroy Park**

Forest steward Karen reported the following:

Cambridge Street entrance: Seattle Public Utilities funded installation of gravel and native plants by Seattle Parks to stabilize this area but subsequent heavy rain washed out the gravel. Parks is on it.

Weeding: She and fellow forest steward Charlotte Linden have coordinated a couple of small weeding parties.

Slippery slope: A slope near an open area on the north/south trail leading to the 97th St. entrance has become a slip hazard, especially for Hazelwood preschoolers who like to come there. She and teacher Gabe have the idea to extend an existing snow fence to the south and engage the students in revegetating the slope. An enchanting entrance to what some call the “owl area” could be by a small path that’s already there. She emphasized that whatever is done must take traffic patterns into account so that visitors don’t cut across vegetation.

**★ Action item: Karen will meet on site with Jesse and Gabe to devise a plan that is okay with Seattle Parks and that, if possible, includes an education component. They will consider if the project might be suitable for an Eagle Scout candidate.**

Park maps: When they arrive, she will post laminated maps in the kiosks created by Summit Atlas students (see later report) when they studied the effects of development on the park.

Tree walk: Lindsey reported that, after extensive looking, the three missing identification signs remain missing. She has ordered replacements at a cost of \$158.45 to come out of the garden-tour grant. Jesse has agreed with her concept of anchoring all the signs in concrete tubes and will schedule the work when replacements are in hand. She will let Chris know when to change the message on our website so the public knows the walk is up again. She just submitted our final grant report, with photos, to the West Seattle Garden Tour.

Wayfinding: Tracy reported that she is coordinating with Lindsey, Rosalie, and Karen to decide the best route to start with so that this project can get under way in earnest.

Wheeled access: Rosalie reported having met with Amir Williams, trails program manager for Seattle Parks. They reviewed the main east/west trail that can be reached from the Barton St. entrance as well as where visitors enter the park from the alley on the west end of that trail. They discussed the seep at the eco-blocks that mark the beginning of park property and he said he would not take action. Phil noted that Parks has tried to stem the seep there in the past because it creates a muddy area for salmon-release students who use that trail to leave the park.

★ **Action item:** *Rosalie will ask Amir to check what was tried to eliminate the seep problem.*

During their walkaround, Amir mentioned the possibility of creating a dense gravel path from the sidewalk to the kiosk to improved wheeled access (now over grass). He said he could get it installed yet this year and mentioned the possibility of its being an Eagle Scout project. Rosalie noted that the slope south from that kiosk is now paved with gravel instead of arborist chips, making it easily used by those relying on wheels. Amir also emphasized that Parks can make improvements to ensure safe use of the arterial trail to the big bridge when students come to release salmon. Judy said that Parks has always done so when we've reported a potential hazard.

★ **Action item:** *Rosalie will relay our interest in a dense gravel path between the sidewalk and kiosk at Barton St.*

## **6. Updated watershed plan**

Judy reviewed the process for drafting an updated watershed plan and thanked all who provided input, especially Ryan Lewis and Venessa Pepi for the initial draft. Judy noted that "Aspirations" are flexible enough to enable us to operate within the plan over time. Kathy raised her concern that relocating logs on the beach to enable spawners to access the mouth of the creek is not included. Judy explained that, when the state rebuilds the ferry trestle, many fewer piles will be needed for support, thus greatly reducing the chance that drift logs will be trapped there and impede spawners.

**Decision:** **By consensus, we approved adoption of the updated watershed plan.**

★ **Action item:** *Judy will share our updated plan with agency partners Seattle Parks and Seattle Public Utilities.*

## **7. Creek/nearshore**

Salmon watch: Dennis reported 32 spawners so far, as documented by 20 watchers. The first arrived on Nov. 4 and more have come daily, despite high predation by harbor seals and a sea lion in the cove. Watchers have seen five dead on the beach but no evidence of carcasses upstream, likely because of predation there. An open creek is scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 12.

Culvert under 45th: Thanks to Tom's monitoring and Judy's reporting, Seattle Public Utilities responded right away to his report of water pooling at the creek culvert intake. An inspector came right away and found that water was flowing okay, with no evidence of another partial blockage. We are to contact the operations control center (206-386-1800) if we see more pooling.

Ferry-terminal rebuild: Judy reported the following:

- During the recent online meeting of the project's community advisory committee, the state presented several new concepts to expand the trestle for more parking while keeping the same width on the east end. The rationale was that keeping overwater coverage in that area the same would be good for eelgrass in nearshore habitat.
- Captain's Park (the bluff overlooking the terminal) is now in play as a possibility to gain a second left-turn lane for vehicles exiting the ferry onto Fauntleroy Way. Among other factors that would need to be considered, the bluff is an archeological site.
- Pre-ticketing has been well received by technical, executive, and community advisory groups. The state expects to present a detailed report on it, as well as transportation patterns, early in the new year.

- The state also expects to host community information meetings in the new year; she emphasized the importance of taking full advantage of that opportunity to provide more input.

Overflowing Dumpsters: Tracy reported having filed a Find It Fix It report about garbage going into the ravine and creek below two often-overflowing bins at the apartment building at 45th and Wildwood. The city asked her to monitor and report back, which she did, but the problem persists, likely because vehicles are often parked in the way of trucks coming to empty the bins.

★ **Action item:** *Tracy will look into getting a no parking sign on the railing.*

★ **Action item:** *Tom will talk with owners of the Wildwood Market about the feasibility of moving the bins to a location that's consistently accessible for garbage trucks.*

## **8. Education**

Summit student research: Judy reported that she and Phil listened to many student reports on Zoom by teams of seniors who studied the impacts of development on Fauntleroy Park. She commended the teacher for devising a way for students with a broad range of capabilities to participate. She now has all the PowerPoint presentations and will be consolidating them into one for posting on our website. This was the first time we've engaged with Summit and she expects we'll have more opportunities.

Boren student research: Judy reported that Shannon Ninburg and Lindsey Conrad ran simultaneous benthic and lichen studies for 50 fourth graders in Boren's STEM program. Tom agreed to take photos and ended up doing much more. When the teacher asked to bring all the students, Judy and Shannon scrambled to develop the lichen study as a way to assess air quality and spare streamside habitat from that much foot traffic. Lindsey stepped in to guide the team focused on identifying and measuring lichen at sites in the upper and lower creek. The teacher gave Shannon only a few minutes in the classroom to preview both studies; consequently, students, teachers, and chaperones arrived unprepared. The benthic team was able to get valid samples, but a debriefing by our volunteers surfaced many aspects of the lichen study that will need to be revised if students are to gain research experience and if we are to gain usable data about air quality over time.

## **9. Outreach**

In the media: Dennis reported stories on the *West Seattle Blog* about student research, the drumming, the first spawners to arrive, and the open creek. Judy noted that the Blog's coverage of the drumming went all the way to the top of Washington State Ferries because ferry workers were involved for the first time.

Web usage: Chris reported that she has been keeping up with posting and that the site has been working well. To date, usage appears to be similar to last year; she will have an full report of 2023 activity in January. Tracy offered to advise on software as Chris might need.

Volunteer recruitment/engagement: Judy reported that five of this year's 20 salmon watchers are new. Most inquiries about volunteering have come through the website. She referred one family directly to Karen for park work parties and interested another person in updating our self-guided nature walk in the park. She and Dennis have scheduled a "tea & talk" with one potential volunteer and may be joined by another.

**Upcoming open creek:** Sunday, Nov. 12, 1:00-3:00 in the spawning reach

**Next meeting:** Thursday, Jan. 11, 6:30 on Zoom