

## **2010 Project Proposal Letter to Apply to Opportunity Fund**

### **Project Name: Walker Street Park and Orchard**

#### **1. Background and Summary**

The goal of the project is to create a new neighborhood multi-use park and green space occupying most of an undeveloped residential block between 17<sup>th</sup> Ave S and 18<sup>th</sup> Ave S, and S. Walker and S Hill Streets. The park will provide much needed open-space on a level area for gatherings, picnics and play structures. Steep zones will remain wooded, and be improved upon with removal of invasive species and re-planting with natives. Trails will also be prudently incorporated into the hillsides. There will be a connection to the historic character of the neighborhood by preserving existing fruit trees as a community orchard. There will also be opportunities for overlooks with views to the Cascades, Mt. Rainier and the Rainier Valley.

The property is owned by Joseph Fasano who, with his wife, currently resides in the only house on the block in question.

The project idea originated with neighborhood discussions about the lack of usable, easily accessible open space. Currently the nearest park to the site is only accessible by crossing busy arterials and through a major elevation change including steep and long flights of stairs. The proposed site lies at the border of two urban villages and fill a gap in usable green space.

#### **2. Plan Consistency**

This project proposal is consistent with the draft 2009 North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan Update which calls for the creation of small pocket parks in the urban village through City acquisition or private development and the installation of children's structured and unstructured play areas in the urban village (see page 9). The park will fulfill the need for usable green-space in a gap identified in the 2006 Seattle Parks Open Spaces Gap Report. The project has started with informal discussions among neighbors, and will undergo a more thorough public review process in the coming weeks.

#### **3. Community Support**

North Beacon Park and Orchard is stewarded by a committee of the Beacon Ridge Improvement Community, a group of 50 neighbors in the area roughly between S. College St. and S. Holgate St. and 19<sup>th</sup> Ave S. and 14<sup>th</sup> Ave S. BRIC has previously won two DON NMF grants to improve the stairways between 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> at Walker, Hill and Holgate Streets which are very close to the proposed park.

The North Beacon Park and Orchard would complement the work already done at the stairways north and south of this site. The park would provide another connection up and down the hill, further linking the neighborhood. These pedestrian connections are the only ways up the hill between S. College St. and Sturgis Ave. S.

BRIC neighbors regularly turn out for work parties, litter pick ups and social gatherings. They can be counted on to support this project as well.

## **2010 Project Proposal Letter to Apply to Opportunity Fund**

### **Project Name: Walker Street Park and Orchard**

#### **4. Creative Design**

The community is fortunate enough to have many creative and civic-minded members with experience in parks development and landscape architecture. A unique aspect of the park will be incorporating the historical orchard.

#### **5. Unique Opportunity**

This is definitely a unique and time-sensitive opportunity. This is the last sizeable portion of undeveloped land in this under-served neighborhood. There have been a large number of multi-family developments over the past few years with no increase in green space to accommodate the growing neighborhood population. With any delay, the cost of acquisition could increase significantly. It is also advantageous that there is only one owner of the entire site.

#### **6. Location**

The location addresses a severe usable green-space deficiency as outlined in the Gap Analysis for a historically under-served population. The surrounding area is experiencing heavy growth with several recent multi-family developments built within several blocks of the park site. The park is within the borders of the North Rainier Urban Center Village and borders the North Beacon Hill Residential Urban Village. The size of the project would be most of a city block, encompassing approximately eight or nine undeveloped residential parcels.

#### **7. Sustainable Principles**

The existing site is a mixture of wooded hillsides and a cleared land. It is adjacent to an incrementally disappearing greenbelt along the eastern slope of North Beacon Hill. Implementing this project will preserve existing tree canopy and provide a place to add large native tree species to the canopy. Hawks and eagles are frequently spotted roosting and nesting in the area.

Part of the site experienced a landslide in December 2004. Several lots are on city-identified critical slide zones with over 40% steep slope, and therefore marginally suitable for development as residential housing (SF5000). Conserving the existing woods and expanding with native vegetation will decrease the likelihood of future slides, and provide habitat for birds and other native fauna.

#### **8. Budget/Funding**

The current assessed value of the nine undeveloped lots totals \$972,000. Actual acquisition costs would probably vary somewhat, and would depend on talks with the current owner. Additional development would cost in the tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars. The community has successfully raised funds for previous neighborhoods projects and has experience with grant writing.

**2010 Project Proposal Letter to Apply to Opportunity Fund**  
**Project Name: Walker Street Park and Orchard**

