



Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Center Vision Advisory Group

May 16, 2018 3:30-5:00 p.m.
Central Services, Board Room

Co-Chair Rob McElroy Executive Director of Teaching and Learning welcomed returning and new members to the group. Rob introduced himself and asked that attendees introduce themselves and talk about their connection and interest in the Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Center. Many attendees talked about attending the Conversation Site as a student, teacher or community member and shared their excitement and anticipation for the future of the site.

Review 2015 Recommendations

The group reviewed the 2015 Recommendation in preparation for today's meeting. Rob walked the group through a PowerPoint overview of the recommendation noting the historical timeline of the site, the history of Bellingham School District programming at the site, the scope of their work and the culmination of the advisory group's 8 recommendations.

Our Charge

Co-Chair Ron Cowan, Executive Director, Capital Projects and School Facilities summarized the 2015 Advisory Group's charge and shared the purpose/charge for this group. Our charge is to create the specifications for a facility we intend to build on the Gordon Carter Site; specifically to produce a written document, which will describe the major program elements associated with a Large Group Facility at the Gordon Carter Conservation Site.

- We will want to identify the number and types of spaces needed inside the Large Group Facility (restrooms, kitchen, large open area only, smaller classroom, other).
- For each space, we will want to describe the estimated number of users as well as the intended use and purpose of the space (large group and/or small group instruction, collaboration and projects, etc.) i.e. 'This is what we plan or want to be able to do in the space'.
- Any other desired elements such as preferred location on the site, preferred proximity and adjacencies to other site components, environmental variables, required technology, finishes, display requirements, etc.

Providing this information to the design team will ensure the design supports the use and purpose of the building. The design team will share their 'solution(s)' prior to finalizing plans and moving the project out to bid for construction.

Two meetings are scheduled for this committee to accomplish this task and hand a completed document off to a design team this summer.

Update Team on Infrastructure Improvement Plans

Ron Cowan shared the elements of infrastructure improvements. The timeline for our recommended actions was delayed due to a moratorium on drilling wells in the Lake Whatcom watershed. Drilling for water is now permissible again.



Current and Planned Uses:

- **3rd Grade** – Sarah Walker, science teacher on special assignment, shared the vision of providing an experience for all third graders. The Pioneer program, designed for a previous set of standards, does not align with current state standards. We are exploring a potential 4 week program focusing on habitat and what humans and non-humans need for habitat; how all communities need to work together to survive.
- **6th Grade** – Gene Meyer, Professor of Huxley College of the Environment, provided an overview of the 6th grade Environmental Science program, which operates each spring with the support of Western Washington University and Whatcom Community College Interns. Whatcom Middle School is currently taking part in this program on the conservation site in partnership with WWU's Huxley College undergraduate and graduate students. They would like to offer this experience to the other middle schools as well.

Rob asked the team to divide into groups of 3-4 to do a deep dive into the aspects of the 2015 Recommendation related to facility design and construction. The groups identified elements they feel are important and would like to see included in the written document

Ron Cowan provided an example of what is given to a design team when building a classroom. He provided a framework to think about the different elements of large group facility. The group spent time filling out the worksheet. The notes were collected and will be used to develop and draft the document.

Rob offered a walking tour of the Gordon Carter Environmental Learning Site on Saturday, May 19, for anyone who would like to see it. Others wanting to see the site at another time have the option of driving out on their own. Rob asked that they contact him ahead of time to confirm directions and access to the property.

Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.