



GROUNDSWELL

NORTHWEST

How to Grow a Park

by Dawn Hemminger

Growing a park takes a lot more than just having a great idea. The process can take many years (even a decade) and can involve doing things you wouldn't have imagined you would ever be doing, like gluing eyes to fish made out of recycled vinyl shades and loving it!

Groundswell NW has provided fiscal sponsorship for the East Ballard Community Association (EBCA) and its 14th Ave NW Park Boulevard project for more than six years now and has continued to provide mentorship as this project has evolved into an official Seattle Parks project, funded by the Seattle Parks and Green Spaces Levy. As of this Fall, Mithun has been hired as design consultant, and the design process will continue through this Spring with the next public community involvement meeting **Wednesday March 7 from 7pm - 9pm at St. Alphonsus Parish School**. The EBCA would like to share seven steps that have been key to moving toward our goal of someday strolling through the 14th Ave NW Park Boulevard. These steps can work for any project that begins with a great idea and are detailed here:

Step 1: Share your idea – Get out there and tell everyone about your idea. Don't be discouraged by the naysayers, because there are people out there who want to support you. The idea of a park on 14th came from a neighbor, Peter Locke, at a blockwatch meeting. This is where the core steering committee formed and the journey began.

Step 2: Host activities and events – Start organizing small events, like an August Night-Out Potluck, Adopt-a-Street Cleanup, or a neighborhood walking tour. As more people participate in these events and start to get to know each other better, a desire to take a more active role in improving the neighborhood will emerge and support for a park will grow.

Step 3: Build strong relationships – Being involved in the larger community allows you to learn from those who've come before you and provides access to a much wider support group. The EBCA has been overwhelmed by the continued support, whether financial, food donations, or space for meetings provided by local businesses and institutions who have as much vested in the community as the residents. Local nonprofits, like Groundswell NW and Sustainable Ballard have also provided invaluable mentorship and opportunities to collaborate on events.

Step 4: Get the word out – In today's digital world, it can be easy to just send an email or post something on a blog or Facebook, but that alone isn't effective. In addition to electronic tools, post flyers on telephone poles, make phone calls and even send invitations in the mail. When asked at social events, "What



do you do for a living?" tell them about the park. Also make sure your community newspaper and blog reporters are kept up to date, because a little press can go a long way!

Step 5: Embrace change – Be open to widening the lens of focus for your group. The original idea may still be a core goal, but embrace new opportunities to grow and change. The EBCA broadened its focus from just creating a park to enhancing the quality of life and sense of belonging in the East Ballard community. This change opened up new doors, including the rebirth of a community association and a seat on the Ballard District Council. You never know where an open mind to change will lead you next!

Step 6: Go for it – Always take advantage of opportunities, no matter how big or small they may seem. In the past six years, the EBCA has applied for and received support from two Department of Neighborhood Small & Simple Grants, two Neighborhood Project Funds, the Bridging the Gap Levy, and the Seattle Parks and Green Spaces Levy. Each opportunity you go for will build upon each other ultimately leading you to that park and amazing community support behind it. As EBCA co-chair Shannon Dunn always says, "Inch by inch, it's a cinch!"

Step 7: Celebrate – Growing a Park takes time, energy and persistence, so in order to stay energized, you have to have fun along the way. The process should be as enjoyable as the finished product. Every step should be celebrated, whether it be a large community event or a simple toast among friends. You'll find that some of your most favorite people in the world were found during this process and that all of your efforts will seem worthwhile through the friendships you've made along the way.

More information can be found at eastballard.org



PLANTING PARTNERSHIPS ON 14TH

by Dawn Hemminger

Have you seen the fish-sticks floating in the median planters as you stroll along 14th Ave NW? As part of the EBCA's "Planting Partnerships on 14th" project, St. Alphonsus Parish School teachers and students created these beautiful works of art. This work was funded by a Dept. of Neighborhood's **Small and Simple Neighborhood Matching Fund Grant**. As you stroll along, take the time to read what the students wrote on their fish to understand how the process of growing a park has truly enhanced the quality of life and sense of belonging in our community.



CROWN HILL PARK PROGRESS REPORT

by Catherine Weatbrook

We're so excited for our new Crown Hill Park to officially open in late Spring. The skate spot, which Seattle Parks and the contractor thankfully made available to the neighborhood, already sees regular use. The most important part that remains is for the grass to grow in and get a good base. As soon as plans for the park grand opening are finalized, we will be letting community members know so they can join in the celebration!

Creating facilities for the community on the old Crown Hill School site was a key strategy of the Crown Hill / Ballard Neighborhood Plan, and Crown Hill Park is an important part of this effort.

Funding for the park was provided by the Parks and Green Spaces Levy approved by voters in 2008.

More information can be found at seattle.gov/parks/projects/crown_hill/



2011 LOCAL HEROES

Carol Deuscher, Mark Blitzer and Robert Drucker

Each year the Groundswell NW Board recognizes Local Heroes whose efforts to improve our community stand out. In 2011, we honored two long-time park stewards, Mark Blitzer and Carol Deuscher, and Sunset Hill Community Association president, Robert Drucker.

Carol Deuscher lives in Magnolia and on her own initiative does a daily sweep of parks and public access sites, typically starting in the wee hours at Discovery Park and working her way along Commodore Way, over the Ballard Bridge and around to Salmon Bay Natural Area, picking up trash and sorting out recyclables. Thank you, Carol, for your remarkable efforts to help keep the shores of Salmon Bay clean!

Mark Blitzer has been a steady volunteer at the Salmon Bay Natural Area, where he came to one of our early work parties and just kept coming back. Organizing volunteer work parties can be a lonely task, so it is very heartening to find a volunteer who can be counted on to show up and do whatever is needed. Mark is that kind of volunteer, and he also pitches in at other work parties, whether for Groundswell NW projects or other environmental organizations..

Robert Drucker has emerged as a community leader, serving as a trustee for the Sunset Hill Community Association, representing it at the Ballard District Council, then representing Ballard at the City Neighborhood Council. He served on the Neighborhood Matching Fund Citywide Review Team helping award grants for projects throughout the city. As president of the Sunset Hill Community Association, he has overseen the creation of a successful raingarden at the clubhouse and spearheaded the Sunstation Park design project, which resulted in a Dept. of Neighborhoods Matching Fund Grant for visioning a potential solar park in Sunset Hill.

PROMOTING SEATTLE NEIGHBORHOOD GREENWAYS

by Jennifer Litowski, Colin Dietrich

Do you want to walk or ride your bike to the store but don't feel safe near traffic? Can your kids ride their bikes to school or are the streets too busy? Neighborhood greenways can be the solution - safe, comfortable routes that connect us to the places we want to go, such as schools, parks, and local businesses. These are non-arterial streets that give priority to people walking and riding bikes, making a safe, family-friendly space. Adding green space, parks access, and storm water diversion allows us to create a truly unique public space.



Ballard Greenways got off to a great start in 2011, beginning as a group of neighbors with a vision and culminating with the Seattle Department of Transportation's commitment to build seven new greenways. For 2012, we have several goals; the first and most exciting will be working with SDOT to implement a **Greenways route on NW 58th Street between Seaview Ave NW and 4th Ave NW**. We're also pursuing grants to install pedestrian and bicycle improvements at key intersections along NW 58th Street. Additionally, we plan to coordinate routes into Phinney Ridge and Greenwood this year and map out a North-South route to Crown Hill. City wide, we're collaborating with other Greenways groups on statewide slow neighborhood speed designations and the inclusion of Greenway designs in the Bicycle Master Plan update.

For more information about Ballard Greenways and how to get involved, visit ballardgreenways.org and visit us on Facebook at Ballard Greenways.

FOCUS ON STEWARDSHIP

by Dave Boyd

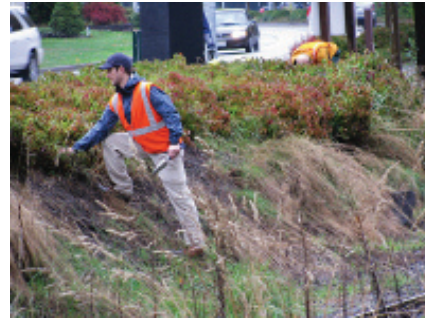
Most of Groundswell NW's attention has typically been on creating new parks and habitat, but maintaining them is also key to their success. Maintenance is often more than just picking up litter and weeding.

At Salmon Bay Natural Area there have been ongoing issues with illegal activity at the site. By creating an attractive area to stop along the Burke Gilman Trail and view the ship canal, we also created an attractive spot for illegal drinking, drug use and camping. The issues came to a head last summer, when residents at the Golden Sunset retirement complex across from the site reached out to Groundswell NW as the neighborhood contact for the project.

We directed concerns and complaints to Seattle Public Utilities, which manages the site, and Seattle Police Department, but also convened a stakeholders meeting to bring the parties together to discuss the issues and identify potential solutions. The meeting included a representative from Seattle Department of Transportation, which has jurisdiction over parts of the site.

As a result of that meeting, two illegal encampments were cleared by City crews, and Groundswell NW organized a work party to thin vegetation around the plaza area so that illicit activities would not be hidden. Later in the fall a Seattle Conservation Corps crew

transplanted shrubs to further open up sight lines and help block access to areas that are off-limits.



At Webster Park, Groundswell NW was called upon to help facilitate restoration of the damaged bas relief ceramic artwork. Groundswell NW Founder, Local Hero and Denny Award recipient Lillian Riley initiated efforts to secure funding, and the artist Charles Bigger was hired to do the restoration. Groundswell NW negotiated an agreement with Parks to help maintain the artwork.

Groundswell NW remains committed to being good neighbors and keeping our sites safe and attractive for all members of the community. If you'd like to help, go to our website for more volunteer opportunities. www.groundswellnw.org

SUNSET HILL – SHILSHOLE GATEWAY PROJECT

by Dave Boyd

The Department of Neighborhoods awarded a **Small and Simple Matching Fund** grant in Spring 2011 to develop a concept plan to improve the corridor between Sunset Hill and Shilshole, and then do one or more modest landscape enhancement projects. This approach was intended to engage neighbors interested in longer range plans, and those more inclined to hands on improvements. It also ensures that the immediate improvements fit within a broader vision for the corridor.

The majority of the grant was for a design consultant to work with the community, the City and property owners to create a plan to:

- remove noxious and invasive plants
- plant low-growing, drought tolerant plants
- improve visibility and sight lines
- improve the pedestrian connections
- beautify the area and increase the pleasure of walking, biking and driving

Barker Landscape Architects was selected as design consultant and led a Kick-off workshop in July. The wide range of ideas from the Kick-off workshop was presented for further community feedback at a Night-Out event on August 2nd.

Attention quickly turned to the obvious focus for initial improvements: the ends of the median that frequently became overgrown, blocking sight lines at the intersections. Neighbors were mobilized to prepare the areas for planting in the Fall. Meanwhile, outreach and planning continued. A range of options for improvements were presented at an October 1 community meeting and additional outreach is being done over the Winter

to solicit input from neighbors not able to attend the October workshop.

Two work parties in November and December began the planting of the median ends. Volunteers and neighbors have also pitched in to clear weeds from the sidewalks leading down to Shilshole. Additional work parties will be held in late Winter and early Spring to plant bare root stock and sow areas with wildflower mixes.

An application for Neighborhood Project funds to make crossing improvements at the north end of the median, at NW 62nd Street, is being submitted and reviewed in early 2012. A final report documenting the work done, ideas generated, community input and potential future steps will be completed by April 2012.

Thanks to all who have participated and volunteered to help maintain the improvements.



For more information about current events see our Sunset Hill Shilshole Gateway Facebook page.

Catherine Darley, President
 Dawn Hemminger, Treasurer
 Lydia Marshall, Secretary
 Andrea Faste, Immediate Past President

Dave Boyd, Past President
 Ann Sauer
 Jan Satterthwaite
 David Folweiler

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.groundswellnw.org



SAVE THE DATE! APRIL 4, 2012

ANNUAL MEETING AND DESSERT POTLUCK

Location: Ballard Boys and Girls Club

1767 NW 64th St. Seattle, WA 98107

Time: 7-9pm

Come join us for **"Growing Seattle's Green Agenda in 2012"** with Council President **Sally Clark**. This is a wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas and learn first-hand what is in store for Ballard.

ADDITIONAL 2011 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- **Field Day Games at Ballard Commons** proved fun for all. Groundswell NW hosted neighbors and friends, kids and adults for a variety of fun and challenging games on a sunny late July day at Ballard Commons Park. The event was co-hosted with Ballard On-the-Park Apartments and QFC, who donated picnic suppers to satisfy all the enthusiastic participants.
- **3rd Annual Variety for Charity** many thanks to Susan Harper and Egan's Ballard Jam House for putting on this fun event in November. The entertainment was fantastic and over \$300 was raised for Groundswell NW!
- **Kirke Park** held its annual fundraising holly sale, perhaps its last, as the park began construction in late 2011.
- **Bikeshare Group's "Bikes Around Ballard"**: Groundswell teamed up with The Bike Share Group to lead a tour of ten Crown Hill-Ballard parks, open spaces and parks-to-be on September 24, connecting at Ballard Commons to attend a Moving Planet event at South Lake Union.



2012 OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Sunset Hill - Shilshole Gateway and Salmon Bay Natural Area** will continue to have work parties and Adopt-a-Street events between the two sites to maintain plantings and clean litter. Contact Dave Boyd, dave.boyd1@comcast.net.
 - **Webster Park** will be hosting a 15th Anniversary in early June. Contact Amy Janas, amyjanas@gmail.com, to help plan and conduct the event, or to help with ongoing stewardship.
 - **Crown Hill Glen** work parties help maintain this hidden neighborhood natural area. Contact Joyce Ford, joyce.ford@juno.com.
 - **Ballard Corners** ongoing work parties will be held, check their website for news and events: ballardcornerspark.org
 - **Parks Levy Opportunity Fund** applications for round two will be available in May, with letters of intent due in June.
 - **Seattle Foundation's GiveBIG** campaign will provide and opportunity to leverage donations to Groundswell NW on May 2nd, stay tuned for details.
- Check out the calendar on our website for more ongoing events and opportunities: www.groundswellnw.org