



# GROUNDSWELL

## NORTHWEST

### Creating a Park Boulevard on 14th Avenue NW

by Dawn Hemminger

On December 6, 2010, the Seattle Parks and Green Spaces Levy Citizens Oversight Committee finalized their recommendations to allocate an estimated \$1.5 million in levy funds toward development of a Park Boulevard on 14th Avenue NW. These funds will be used to develop 2-3 blocks of a linear park between NW 59th and NW 61st along 14th Avenue NW, the first stage of the larger vision of transforming the entire mile-long stretch between NW 65th and the ship canal. The 14th Avenue NW Park Boulevard project is unique because it uses property already owned by the city (the street right-of-way and the center median), meaning that money that would normally be spent on purchasing park property can go directly toward development.

Originally this street was named Railroad Avenue and had a popular street car line running along the center lane. This historical arrangement necessitated an excessively wide right of way. When the street car was retired, the tracks were replaced with gravel and the center lane became a parking lot. In addition to attracting abandoned vehicles and furniture, the center median is also a pedestrian and vehicular hazard, resulting in many accidents and a recent fatality.

The exceptional width is also an opportunity. In 2006, a small group of residents envisioned something better for this neglected street. Thanks to a Department of Neighborhoods Small and Simple Projects Matching fund grant, and the support of Groundswell NW, these East Ballard residents hired Carlson Architects to work with the community to develop a Vision Plan, moving the traffic lanes to the west side of the street and removing the 25 foot center median, replacing it with much needed park space on the east side of the right of way. The resulting space, nearly 40 feet wide, is ample width for many amenities, including play space, P-Patches, benches, bikes and green space. In addition to creating a greener, more community based space, the reduced traffic width will also be safer for both pedestrians and vehicles and provide beneficial stormwater infiltration.

The process of creating the Vision Plan brought the community out to take ownership of the future for 14th Ave NW. The street

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Duwamish tribal leader Cecile Hansen and sculptor Marvin Oliver at Welcome Figure inauguration.

photos by Lydia Marshall

### Welcome Figure Crowns Salmon Bay Natural Area

by Dave Boyd

Nearly 14 years after Groundswell NW first identified Ballard's last wooded shoreline as an opportunity in our open space inventory, countless hours of effort to create the Salmon Bay Natural Area culminated with the dedication of "A Salish Welcome" on June 17, 2010. From the beginning we envisioned a landmark artwork that would draw visitors to the site and help tell its story. Marvin Oliver's monumental bronze, aluminum and glass Welcome Figure has exceeded all expectations. Oliver completed the sculpture base later in the year, installing steel panels with cut-outs depicting adult and juvenile salmon and other Salish motifs.

Oliver, a renowned local artist of Quinault heritage, and his cousin, Duwamish tribal leader Cecile Hansen, inaugurated the Welcome Figure which is based on traditional designs but reinterpreted in modern materials. Groundswell NW and Seattle's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs spearheaded the installation of the sculpture, with funding from the Department of Neighborhoods Large Project Matching Fund and Seattle Public Utilities 1% for Arts program.

The community continues to maintain the site and the surrounding street and trail sections, with quarterly work parties and ongoing monitoring.

To participate please contact Dave Boyd, 498-6636 or [dave.boyd1@comcast.net](mailto:dave.boyd1@comcast.net)

## 2010 ANNUAL RETREAT

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The 2009 Board retreat focused on the questions: "What has changed in Ballard since Groundswell NW began 20 years ago" and "What are our open space and habitat needs now?"

This fall we convened again to build on the work of the 2009 retreat, and focused on strategies and action items to move forward on several of the previously identified areas. The creation of specific action items has been very energizing, and we're moving forward. We're currently working to:

Expand our "reach" to increase the cross-section of Ballard community involvement and reflect the current and changing demographics in Ballard. New communities include condo owners, apartment dwellers, retirees and families without children.

- Increase exposure through social media
- Hold events and meetings in sites that engage a new demographic
- Hold a treasure-hunt event to all our parks

Increase support and involvement with "Friends Of Parks" groups, focusing on preservation of urban forests. The need to maintain parks and their ecological health has become evident. There is a desperate need to preserve our urban forest, locally being the Sunset Hill Greenbelt.

Outreach to other organizations

- Urban Tree Policy education (already held in November)
- How-To guide to creating a neighbor-initiated park
- Feature a 'Park of the Month'

Stay tuned in to our monthly e-newsletters for more on these initiatives! If you have time or expertise to contribute, please contact Catherine Darley at: [cidarley@yahoo.com](mailto:cidarley@yahoo.com)

## 2010 LOCAL HEROES

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**Dawn Hemminger and Michael Harthorne**

Each year the Groundswell NW Board recognizes Local Heroes whose efforts to improve our community stand out. In 2010, we honored one of our own and a local reporter.

**Dawn Hemminger** has not only served on our Board of Directors for several years in the demanding job of Treasurer, she has also helped spearhead the Park Boulevard on 14th Avenue NW project (see article on Page 1) and re-establish the East Ballard Community Association. In addition to energizing her neighborhood Dawn has been very involved in the Ballard District Council, including its efforts to prepare for a neighborhood plan update.



**Michael Harthorne** could always be counted on to cover Groundswell NW and other community events for the Ballard News Tribune. At a time when BNT had consolidated its operations and closed its Ballard office, Michael took their reporting of community events to a new, higher level, showing up for evening meetings, daytime work parties and helping us spread the news through his articles and photographs. He is now covering Ballard on the KOMO News blog.



## NEW PARK ON 9TH IS NOW KIRKE PARK!

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by Alyssa Smith, Friends of Kirke Park

Kirke Park's development continues at a rapid pace. In 2010, our park received its official name. Kirke means church in Swedish and Norwegian and commemorates the church that stood on the site, preserving it as open space. We now have a fairly final development plan. The park construction will go out to bid this winter, with actual implementation starting this spring and completion planned for late summer 2011.

Since the park was acquired, neighbors have joined forces to maintain the space and dream about what could be built there. As a result, we have had great times meeting each other over ice cream, chatting while removing holly, ivy and laurel, and just enjoying our undeveloped space on a nice day. We worked together to have the property purchased by the city, and we met together to design the space to reflect our community and its needs. Now, with all the planning and dreaming coming to fruition, we can look forward to tending and enjoying a beautiful neighborhood park with new friends.



*Kirke Park workers break for a rest*



continues to be maintained by the community through twice-yearly Adopt A Street Cleanup events. The east ballard community association was also revived through this continued community involvement and worked with the community and the city to add intersection crossing improvements and new plantings on 14th Ave NW at NW 58th. In 2010, the east ballard community association received a Department of Neighborhoods Small and Simple Projects Matching Fund grant, along with generous donations from local businesses, to install planters at the median ends along 14th to encourage community building and beautify the neighborhood. The outpouring from the residents, businesses and schools to support these events and projects throughout the years has become the foundation that will make our next step of building a park successful.

This community project is an excellent example of how allowing ourselves to dream big can open many doors and lead us to new

and wonderful experiences. Now, after many years of building community and working towards this vision, we're finally going to create a new much needed park in a community that has shown that they deserve it. We have a long road ahead of us. Final funding approval is still required by the City, the community will be providing public comment and there is a great deal of detailed design work to complete. We look forward with great enthusiasm as we continue the next chapter in this exciting project. It's a great time to get involved and play a direct role in making our community stronger. Spread the word and your support!

For more information visit: [eastballard.org](http://eastballard.org) and contact Dawn Hemminger at: [eastballard@gmail.com](mailto:eastballard@gmail.com)



Neighbors gather to add new planters along 14th Ave. NW

## SUBSTATION PARK FEASIBILITY STUDY

by Robert Drucker, President Sunset Hill Community Association

The February 2011 issue of Sunset Magazine will feature the design for the Sunset Substation pocket park, a joint venture of Groundswell NW and the Sunset Hill Community Association. Groundswell and Sunset Hill Community Association received a Department of Neighborhoods Small and Simple Projects Matching Fund grant in December 2009, and hired CAST Architecture to lead the feasibility study. Thus began a series of four public meetings, design charrettes, and presentations to Seattle City Light, City Councilperson Bruce Harrell, and the Mayor's office. By the time the design was complete in the spring, it had appeared in the Daily Journal of Commerce, Ballard News Tribune, and on KOMO News.

It's a simple idea: Seattle City Light owns surplus land, and the 1998 Ballard/Crown Hill Neighborhood Plan identified these parcels as appropriate for parks. Following the new concept of Community Solar, it would be a perfect match to combine a public pocket park with photovoltaic panels that feed electricity into the city's power grid.



The final Feasibility Study and Community Design report, published in June, lists some of the park's features: It would generate 31.5kW of electricity each year; it would provide a variety of gathering, seating, and play spaces; it would combine native planting with sculptural terrain to make a modern and exciting public place. The

architects suggested that the carbon-neutral, net-zero energy, and net-zero water-use project might qualify for the Living Building Challenge, the most progressive and demanding sustainable building standard.

The Substation Park would cost \$617,000 for the park components and \$379,000 for the solar component. Property acquisition would cost about \$570,000, unless the community convinces Seattle City Light to retain ownership.

Visit [www.sunsetsubstation.org](http://www.sunsetsubstation.org) or Contact [robert.drucker@gmail.com](mailto:robert.drucker@gmail.com) if you'd like to participate.

## MATCHING GRANT FOR THE BIKE SHARE GROUP

by Mark Hulscher, Head Groupie, The Bike Share Group

This fall, The Bike Share Group was awarded a \$5,000 matching grant from Groundswell NW to support efforts to create a bike share system for the Ballard neighborhood. Bikeshare supports Ballard's long-term livability goals, and provides healthy transportation alternatives that reduce environmental impact.

The Bike Share Group is now in it's second year of existence. We have built several prototypes, including a cedar framed station that we showcased at the 2010 Sustainable Ballard 10-10-10 festival. With the help of the matching grant we hope to gather the funding required to build stations, assemble bikes and start letting people ride.

We are planning a small system with 20 bikes and 5 to 10 stations. Our goal is to coordinate with Seattle Dept. of Transportation and the Parks Department and place these stations at or near Groundswell NW parks and at key locations such as The Locks.

Ballard has recently been listed as a bike friendly neighborhood. What a great place to introduce public bicycle systems to our region, and have fun riding bikes to all of our great parks. Thank you Groundswell NW.



## GROUNDSWELL NW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# GROUNDSWELL NORTHWEST

VISIT OUR WEBSITE [www.groundswellnw.org](http://www.groundswellnw.org)



PO Box 17163 • Seattle, WA 98127

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## SAVE THE DATE! MARCH 2, 2011

ANNUAL MEETING AND DESSERT POTLUCK

Location: Ballard Community Center

6020 28th Ave NW, Seattle, WA 98107

Time: 7-9pm

Come join us for a discussion with Councilwoman **Sally Bagshaw**, chair of Parks & Seattle Center and Waterfront Planning. Bring something sweet if you can, or just come ready to partake!

### ADDITIONAL 2010 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- **Salmon Bay Natural Area mycelium inoculation** was a resounding success. Liz Dunigan and crew enriched the steep slope with mushroom mycelium to create a healthy rich forest floor environment. The idea has been adopted by SPU for storm water cleanup in rain gardens. We wish Liz the best as she steps down from the board and moves on to new projects in 2011.
- **Hazel Heights P - Patch** celebrated opening on March 21st.
- **Second Annual Edible Garden Tour**, June 26th, thank you to our 10 host gardeners for a successful tour!
- **Variety for Charity** event organized by Susan Harper at Egan's Ballard Jam House October 21st.
- **Troll's Knoll** finalized a Small and Simple grant to remove the blackberries on the east side of the Aurora right of way next to the Fremont Troll, and is on the final list for the Parks Levy Opportunity Fund to complete this innovative new park.
- **Crown Hill Park** has long been a priority for Groundswell NW. Seattle Parks and Recreation held two community meetings in 2010 to review the earlier design and is preparing construction documents to begin building using Parks and Green Spaces Levy funds. See [www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/crown\\_hill](http://www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/crown_hill) for more information.
- **Heron Habitat Helpers**, a partner in our Salmon Bay Initiative, was recognized for its volunteer habitat improvement efforts in Kiwanis Ravine with a 2010 Denny Award.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

**Friends of a Park Boulevard on 14th Avenue NW** will be moving forward with the Parks Department to chose a design team for concept design and cost estimating. To help with this exciting project contact Dawn Hemminger at [eastballard@gmail.com](mailto:eastballard@gmail.com).

**Park of the Month**, Groundswell NW is going to be highlighting many of their parks with fun events throughout 2011. Watch our website for opportunities to help highlight your neighborhood's favorite park. Contact Andrea Faste at [amfaste@comcast.net](mailto:amfaste@comcast.net) for details.

Check out the calendar on our website for ongoing events and opportunities: [www.groundswellnw.org](http://www.groundswellnw.org)

