

Fountain Plaza Park "Place-making" Party in the Street Participant Comments

Fountain District Urban Village Master Planning

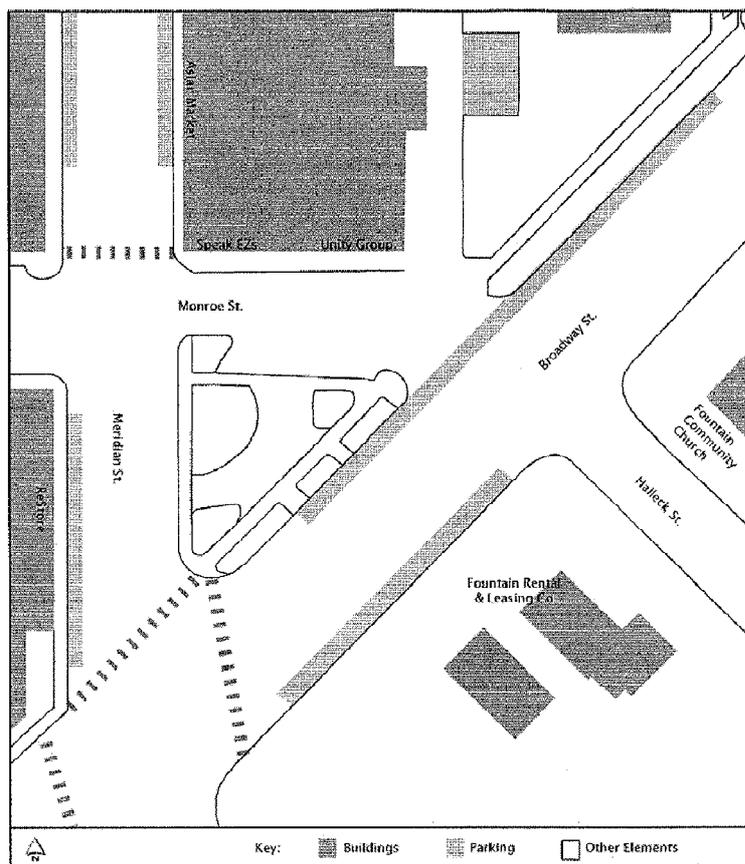
Focus Group Meeting 1: September 12th, 2009

12:00 noon – 4:00 pm

Participants in the afternoon's activities were asked to share their thoughts, experiences and ideas about how the Fountain Plaza Park functioned with the closure of Monroe Street, Speak EZ's outdoor dining, the configuration and use of informal seating and the addition of landscape plants and softened hardscape. Participants were also asked to comment on the functionality of the space as a community gathering place and to offer any additional ideas they might have about how the space might be used.

People were given the opportunity to make notes on a diagram. Feedback from these diagrams are summarized below, and will be used to inform the master planning process for the Fountain District Urban Village.

Fountain Plaza Park – *New Uses for a Great Space*



Please share your thoughts on how the Fountain Plaza Park functioned today by commenting in writing or on the diagram, above.

Street Closure:

- I feel for the businesses but I like the closure.
- Excellent Idea.
- Awesome! (3 of the same)
- Loved it. (2 of the same)
- Seems easy....
- Yes!!! (2 of the same)
- Bigger park
- Cobblestone Monroe St. between Broadway and Meridian as a 'public space'. Close it permanently.
- Great, at least on weekends.
- Excellent, functionally and psychologically enlarges "park" – makes it useful.
- Narrow the one way street (if unable to close) so the sidewalk could be larger for outdoor seating.

Speak EZ's Outdoor Dining:

- May compensate for street closure.
- Great! (4 of the same)
- Nice.
- Yes!!!
- Awesome
- Will add to the ambience of the 'park' area. (tables noted on diagram along stores)
- Great, maybe add espresso.
- Excellent – I feel it I could be a long-term asset for restaurant – too bad out climate does not allow for more outside dining.
- Convert permanently to sidewalk cafes.

Informal Seating:

- Yes. (6 of the same)
- Yes and lounging too.
- Good. More is better. Shelter for all seasons.
- It's a great place to rest on a walk.
- Straw bales are fun.
- Love the seating.
- Wood benches.
- Excellent and useful.
- All these things enhance "park" feel for this location, e.g. it's nice to see people sitting in the area that is blacktop.

Landscape Plants / softened hardscape:

- Yes (3 of the same)
- I think we should close Monroe St.
- More trees would be useful.
- Glad to see them. Makes the place look nice, more fun.
- Love the landscaping.
- Public art is a must.
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Community Activities:

- Really Great. (2 of the same)
- Today was fun; we liked the games and the music! Thanks for putting in a great event.
- My kid had fun, thanks! WOW! Produce sharing.

- Love the idea of sharing produce and maybe other exchanges!
- Produce sharing!
- Art
- Yea! Fun!

Other Ideas:

- Permanently close the street.
- I think we should have an event every year at Fountain Plaza!
- Kids love to play in the fountain☺.
- Provide parking along Meridian across Monroe St. (noted on diagram).
- I like the "fountain for man and heart" idea! Sculpture of a horse?
- Parallel parking on Meridian St. along park edge and angled parking on Broadway St. along park. View down Monroe. St. (noted on diagram).
- Shelter.
- Picnic table(s) and fountain to play in.
- Trees on west side of Monroe St. and flowers and shrubs on the east side of Monroe, closing off street. (noted on diagram)
- Outdoor dining at Speak EZ's, two groups of four tables. Bulb-out sidewalk corners at Meridian St. and Monroe St. Create angled parking (both sides of street) in front of Unity Group and close the other half of Monroe St. and use pavers to replace the street (all noted on diagram).
- I love outdoor plazas for people getting together.
- Rezone and designate as a restaurant district. Re design should ensure the corner isn't too internally focused. If it was in a more dense population area a hideaway refuge would work but I think here a little external looking design would be attractive to passersby. Also try to maximize bird habitat☺.
- Angled parking (noted on diagram across Monroe St. and along Broadway St.) to offset loss of parking if Monroe St. were closed in this block.
- Make the fountain more attractive.
- Summer weekend art sales on closed street
- Tear down fountain drugs for mixed use with parking for all customers.
- What about a monthly clothing exchange? Having the street closed is terrific. Wouldn't it be nice to do this on weekends, possibly invite a coffee vender to set up and have a community meeting spot? Maybe a mini farmers market on weekends. Summer concerts? - Different night from Elizabeth Park.
- Crosswalk needed by WECU and Mgo!!
- Super day, great ideas. Add a low / small bandstand near center (noted on diagram near parks trash can) and have angled parking along the park on Broadway St.
- Add a tire swing!
- Add a crosswalk on Broadway St. north of Halleck St.
- Provide outdoor seating in front of Speak EZ's about twice the size of the current sidewalk. Close street to provide open space for the park and add parking at each end, parallel on Meridian St. and angled along Broadway St. Keep the bus stop at the park and add a lot of landscaping. (all noted on diagram)
- I love the idea of vacating the Monroe alongside the park as I feel it creates a district park "square" that people are more likely to want to be--a park on a human scale. Postage stamp parks surrounded by traffic are not very inviting to me. Right now the park is so closely violated by traffic on all sides I never want to spend time there reading, resting or chatting. Remove Monroe and add it to that Speak EZ restaurant block and we would have a nice addition to the district to be proud of, great for the restaurant, plus being more useful for future events. I know that removing parking spaces is an issue for businesses, but can they be replaced out back on that triangular grass corner lot?

Monroe next to the park is also a safety issue for vehicles and pedestrians as well. I walk, bicycle, and drive to get to work over there. This is a cramped collection of connecting streets and a crosswalk all connecting to and crossing Meridian. The Girard and Meridian connection occurs at an angle with the old white dentist building to block the view of speeding "green light" traffic. Can't see them coming until it's too late! Yikes! Run!

- I lived in Fort Collins Colorado for years and they shut down a couple of streets to make 'Old Town Square'- It would be worth looking at what they did for us here.



(Old Town Square, Fort Collins CO) Panorama@colinstravele, www.maps.google.com

- I would love meditative sports typical of city pocket parks e.g. inscriptions of 'peace' in different languages. Zen foot massage in Marymoor Park Seattle. Pocket park at Phinney Ave. N and N 67th St.



(Marymoor Park, Seattle WA) Kingcounty.gov



(pocket park at Phinney Ave. & N 67th St) © 2009 Google