In 2013, I made it a point, as the new Groundswell NW president, to meet with our founder, Lillian Riley. Groundswell NW began over 20 years ago with Lillian’s dream of giving children a place to play without having to play in the streets or cross an arterial.

Lillian’s spirit and drive continue to serve as the backbone of Groundswell NW. Current board members are often reminded of what she stands for and what can be accomplished by citizens if they have passion and work hard.

In the 1990s, the City conducted a survey that indicated that the Ballard District had the least open space of any neighborhood outside of Downtown Seattle. In response, Groundswell NW spearheaded an effort, led by board members Dave Boyd and Davidya Kasperzyk, recruiting neighbors to walk every single block in Ballard to identify and inventory all possible open spaces in Ballard.

The resulting Ballard Open Space Inventory and Action Plan was distributed widely and its proposals brought forth a multitude of new open spaces in Ballard, including: • Crown Hill Glen/Plumis

The Advisory Committee has recently released a preliminary report identifying priorities for funding, such as major infrastructure repair, public-private partnerships, new acquisition and development, and operation of community centers and pools. Although Seattle Parks and Recreation receives funding for its operations from the City’s General Fund, the department has experienced budget cuts in recent years. In response, the committee’s report also explores possible funding mechanisms for ongoing operations and capital investments, including property tax levies and a metropolitan parks district, which offer more sustainable and stable solutions.

Although the overall recommendations in this preliminary report are reasonable, Groundswell NW is concerned that it allocates too little funding for development of existing park (continued on page 3)
Utilities installed a security fence shortly after removing the house and boathed that once stood next to the ROW and restoring the whole area with native species).

The good news is that most of the understory vegetation survived the clearing & resulting exposure over the summer. The greater exposure led to the establishment of new invasive species, and suckers, from the bigleaf maples that had been removed are now starting to shade out the native plants as part of the site restoration.

Groundswell NW took the lead in getting estimates for restoring the site, along with vegetation management on the adjacent property owned by the City and The Canal, previously restored with Groundswell’s help. The latter two areas are complete, and the estimate was shared with BNSF, but to-date we have not received a reply.

In the meantime, we continue to help monitor and maintain the upland areas, and if we can get BNSF’s cooperation, may tackle their clear-cut area this spring. Stay tuned to Groundswell NW’s monthly e-newsletter for work party opportunities.

2013 GROUNDSWELL NW UPDATES

Groundswell NW thanks all who attended our Annual Meeting on April 7, 2013 at the Sunset Hill Community Club. Featured speakers were Pomegranate Center founder Milenko Matanovic, and East Ballard Community Association’s Dawn Hemminger, who gave inspirational presentations on creating parks and community spaces.

In addition to a question-and-answer with the two speakers, Groundswell NW presented its annual “Local Heroes” awards, which recognize fellow Ballardites’ efforts to create and enhance parks, public spaces, and habitat in our community. The Friends of Kirke Park were recognized for their wildly successful efforts to create Ballard’s newest community park. Candace Jarrett was lauded for her “beyond the call of duty” efforts to improve the Sunset Hill - Shilshole Gateway. And because he wasn’t able to attend the annual meeting, Rob Mattson received his award and was recognized at the April 10 Ballard District Council meeting for being the “man behind the curtain,” for many years helping Groundswell NW and other groups and citizens negotiate the City bureaucracy and build community in Ballard.

We also elected our slate of officers for the coming year: President David Folweiler, Vice president Frana Milan, Secretary Jan Satterthwaite and Treasurer Matt Hutchins. At the end of 2013, Matt stepped down and the board elected Frana Milan as Treasurer. During 2013 board members Catherine Darley, Ann Sauer and Lydia Marshall also stepped down. Many thanks to Matt, Ann, Catherine and Lydia for their efforts!
Ballard Open Space Plan
(continued from page 1)

Park • Greenwood P-patch • Salmon Bay Natural Area • Thyme Patch Park • Ballard Corners Park • Kirke Park • Baker Park expansion • Burke Gilman Trail extension to Golden Gardens Park • Salmon Bay Natural Area • Numerous traffic circles • Crown Hill Park • Playground improvements at Whittier, Loyal Heights, West Woodland, North Beach, and Salmon Bay schools • Salmon Bay School Sports Field • Soundview Playground • 14th Ave NW Park Boulevard.

Lillian and I agreed that since the 1990s Ballard has undergone significant change, including higher density residential buildings, more pressure on existing open spaces, outdated park designs, overgrown vegetation, etc, which has made the old inventory and plan out of date.

In response, Groundswell NW recently applied for and received a $25,000 Department of Neighborhoods Matching Fund Small & Simple grant to update the original Ballard District Open Space Plan.

What’s the Future of Seattle Parks?
(continued from page 1)
sites and future acquisitions. We also continue to encourage the Parks Department to further empower community-level partner organizations to be active in maintaining and activating our neighborhood parks.

The committee is expected to present their final recommendations to the Mayor and City Council by March 2014. To learn more and to view the report, visit www.seattle.gov/parks/legacy.

BALLARD CELEBRATES FIRST NEIGHBORHOOD GREENWAY
by Jennifer Litowski

In 2013, Ballard celebrated the completion of its first neighborhood greenway along NW 58th St. Hundreds of people came to the opening street party, which included a bicycle rodeo, a ¼ mile hopscotch, a family bike ride and a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Our neighborhood is now enjoying the calmer traffic, safer crossings at intersections and smoother sidewalks. Even in the cold weather, we’re seeing more families walking and biking together!

Ballard Greenways continues to speak for safer streets and better places where we live and work. We’re looking forward to a north-south route to add to Seattle’s growing network of Safe Routes for All! www.facebook.com/BallardGreenways

SEEKING GNW BOARD MEMBERS

Groundswell NW is seeking additional board members committed to making NW Seattle a greener, more livable community. We’re seeking positive, creative individuals with skills in a number of areas, including financial, real estate, marketing and community organizing.

Please contact our President David Folweiler at: david@folweiler.com or (206) 714-4271
GROUNDSWELL NW 2013 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
David Folweiler, President            Dave Boyd    Ann Sauer
Frana Milan, Vice President        Dave Hemminger Catherine Darley
Matt Hutchins, Treasurer           Renee Dagseth
Jan Satterthwaite, Secretary       Lydia Marshall

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JOIN US APRIL 8, 2014!
ANNUAL MEETING AND DESSERT POTLUCK
Featuring MAYOR ED MURRAY discussing
The Future of Parks and Green Infrastructure in NW Seattle

BALLARD LANDMARK - LIBRARY
5433 Leary Avenue NW
7:00 PM

We are happy to welcome our new Seattle Mayor to address future funding of parks and green spaces and invite community members to join us in a question and answer session. Also present will be displays by parks and habitat groups throughout Ballard and beyond. Bring a dessert if you can, but do not feel you need to – there will be plenty for all!

TWO BALLARD PROJECTS AWARDED PARKS LEVY OPPORTUNITY FUNDS
by Dave Boyd

After reviewing over 100 applications, the Parks and Green Spaces Levy Oversight Committee recommended awarding Opportunity Funds to two Ballard projects—BAKER PARK EXPANSION and THREADING THE NEEDLE PARK. The Opportunity Fund was created to give community groups the chance to apply for money addressing park needs, with either expansion of existing parks, creating a new one, or enhancing existing parks and public lands.

BAKER PARK EXPANSION
Baker Park on Crown Hill was one of Groundswell NW’s first projects. Over the years, its narrow through-block layout has created challenges, making it less open to neighbors and attractive to various kinds of illicit activity. When the property just south of the park on 14th Ave NW went on the market last year, neighbors rallied, with support from Groundswell NW, to apply for Opportunity Funds to expand the park. The additional area would open up the park and provide space for more neighborhood oriented activities.

This project was in jeopardy when a developer stepped in and bought the parcel before Seattle Parks Department completed their appraisal, but the City was eventually able to purchase the site. The house on the property is now slated for demolition in the first quarter of 2014, and the fence and hedge between the new parcel and the park have already been removed. There are no funds to plan or develop the space, so it will be “land-banked” for now.

An initial Neighborhood Matching Fund application to engage the neighborhood in planning the site was not successful, but Groundswell NW is committed to working with the neighbors and the City to identify alternative ways to move the planning, design and development forward - possibly through a renewed parks levy or metropolitan parks district (see Future of Seattle Parks, page 1).

THREADING THE NEEDLE PARK
By Elizabeth Dunigan
Threading the Needle Park, located at the 24th Ave NW street-end, was conceived by members of the Threading the Needle Partnership to restore an underutilized space to a public waterfront greenway. The project name references a canoe pathway along Salmon Bay and is derived from the Duwamish word Shilshole, which comes from cilcole and means “to thread the needle”.

The site’s maritime heritage and historical context is celebrated with (continued on page 2)