



Euclid Square Park Community Meeting #2

Location: Oak Park Conservatory, 615 Garfield Street
Date: May 12, 2009
Time: 7pm

Minutes of Meeting

Mr. Mike Grandy of the Park District welcomed the attendees to the meeting and introduced Park District Commissioners, members of the Citizen Committee and staff that were present. He stated that the Euclid Square Park site planning process was the 11th park planning process undertaken by the Park District. There have been two focus groups and one community meeting already held where the design team received initial input on the current conditions of the park. Mr. Grandy then confirmed the schedule for the process as follows:

Community Meeting #3 Tuesday June 2nd

A 4th meeting would be held if necessary.

There would also be a second questionnaire posted on the Park District website to collect input regarding the schemes presented this evening. Residents could also contact the Park District through telephone, Emails and Mail.

Website: <http://www.oakparkparks.com/>

Contact: Diane Stanke Email dianes@oakparkparks.com

Mr. Grandy noted the increased public turnout and welcomed feedback from all at the meeting and encouraged them to tell their friends and neighbors about the planning process. He presented the web address and Park District contact information to the meeting attendees and encouraged all to use the questionnaire online or to write emails or telephone stating their opinions. Twenty-six people have filled out the first questionnaire on line.

He then introduced the design team and handed the meeting over to John Mac Manus of Altamanu, Inc. who made a PowerPoint presentation and requested comments from the attendees. Mr. Mac Manus explained that the design team's role was to look at this park with the residents and then to come up with an image of how this park should look 20 years from now. He reiterated the information already



collected and presented at the previous public meeting. Josephine Bellalta of Altamanu Inc. went into some detail about the current unfortunate condition of the trees, informing the meeting attendees about the threat to the many ash trees in the park; the aging and deteriorating condition of the crab apples and the how the pines are infested with borers and Diplodia. Please see the PowerPoint presentation for more detailed information

Jamil Bou-Saab, VP of Terra Engineering, presented a potential solution to the drainage issues that are very evident in the SW corner of the park. The center of the park would be raised slightly and the rain water would drain to the east and south, where it would be collected in catch basins. A bio-swale could be used to collect the water but the park was small and heavily used so it might not be a practical solution. But the run-off from the tennis courts could be collected in a rain garden just to the SE of the courts. The water would be detained in the rain garden and then slowly would be released. The Park District is concerned that they do not have enough staff to maintain the various garden areas already and would have to be careful as to what new maintenance they promised to undertake.

John then showed the meeting attendees 4 designs for the future park based on comments made so far in the process. The following is a synopsis of the comments made at the meeting.

General Comments

I love the idea of the rocks and the destination. I also like the grand entry from the corner into the play area. I like that you haven't messed with what people are doing in the park, I really like that you have kept all the different uses.

I love the expanded mounds.

I like the Boulders over at Barrie Park; you don't want to put too many things in the park. Does scheme 2 show boulders too?

Some boulders would add to the character.

Retaining the bucolic nature with the winding path is nice; I like to have the path inside the park as much as possible.

Preserve as much green space as you can. I like the idea of the promenade which shows you the boundary of the park. A lot of people use that space for walking around and navigating the park.

My kids have gone beyond this space, the favorite part of Euclid was the serpentine walk, it's a wonderful place to teach children to ride a bike because it is a continuous loop and you don't have to make turns. As long as kids don't have to negotiate an actual turn when they are learning. The promenade is a nice idea, it is dead space, and I'd be concerned about what you would see in there. Less is fine with me, perhaps a few seats.



My main concern is for the kids to get the bikes through, also remember we would be running around.

Rollerblading goes around and around the park. It's a circulator.

Trees

One of my big concerns from living smack across the street is that I don't want to see all the trees removed at once, I'd like to see them be replaced slowly.

Are any of the memorial trees affected by this?

- o Josephine stated that in the past we've been able to move memorial trees to a different but similar location in the park. There is one large Ash on the South East corner that is a memorial and is not doing very well. The memorial was added after the tree was mature.

Nancy Holmes stated that the families of any memorial trees that might be affected are always contacted first if the trees are to be removed or to be replaced

Mike Grandy says the problem with the Ash trees is that within 8-10 years all of our Ash may well be gone because of Emerald Ash Borer. We cannot confirm whether or not any of these trees have Emerald Ash Borer but they are in very very poor condition and show severe signs of stress.

- o If you see a lot of wood peckers showing up suddenly, please let the Park District know as that is a sign that the Emerald Ash Bore is present.

Play Center:

What I like here is that you added the trees which buffer the play area from the traffic which is a good thing and I like seeing the fence along those main streets.

This is one of the few parks in the area that is geared towards the younger children.

The way the playground at Euclid is right now is fantastic. It works well for age groups, 2 baby swings, and 2 regular swings. The playground equipment is at the level of a 3-8 year old and there is also stuff for the little kids too.

The equipment you showed the current kids wouldn't attack those elements.

It really changes the dynamic of that play space.

At Lincoln you have to be pretty old to play on it.

Mike explains that the project is not complete but will be phased. Eventually the apparatus for younger kids will be there at Carroll and Lincoln.

It is a very small space, when you attract older kids it changes the dynamic.

Clarification for playground: Age range desire is 3-8! And keep the sandbox

Josephine said that she tried to use play equipment for around the 5 year old age group and up.

It would be better if the playground be kept for small kids, no 12 year olds or older.

Josephine said she would revise the design

Tennis Courts:

People of all ages are playing tennis in this park; it's not only a park for little kids.



I'd like to have a bang board in the tennis courts.

Sure as long it is not wood! Makes too much noise.

The tennis courts get a lot of use, not just from Fenwick, I sometimes walk to other courts because these courts are too busy.

Fenwick says they play their tournaments at Taylor Park and leave a court open

Oh they play tournaments at Euclid.

If you are going to move the location of the courts, I would assume they are going to be redone?

They are not holding up terribly well and the fencing has been bad since we moved there 13 years ago. Cracks are starting already; but generally they are in much better shape than they used to be.

The basic resurfacing was a band aid, when you do that you tend to have cracks in a year or two and you get low spots because of the water.

The fencing around the tennis court would be replaced (in the new project).

One thing we mentioned a little in the last meeting was opening the fences up to prevent the use of the tennis courts as a dog park.

It came down to a little bit of design and a little bit of policy, talked about leaving sections off of the fence etc. Because of the proximity to the playground and the street, the preferred thing is to keep all the fencing around the courts.

Mike Grandy explains that dog urine breaks down the acrylic surface of the tennis courts; he would like to deter people from using the courts for a substitute to an off-leash dog park.

I remember when they would flood the tennis courts for ice skating

Yep but we do not do that anymore as the skates slice up the surface of the courts.

The acrylic covering on the courts is \$3-5,000 to cover the courts.

Mounds, Drainage and Field

Make the baseball field larger, if it was the same size as the Ridgeland Diamonds that would be sufficient

We have enlarged the baseball field on all schemes

Would making that area more conducive to walking across it concern you that people will be cutting through the park? Nobody does it now when they are walking in a swamp.

We could see what happens. If there is a "desire line" formed by people using it a lot we can consider what to do.

The outfield has always been fairly dry and dries very quickly; the worst spot is along 3rd base and behind home plate. That is where it is worst for the outfield to dry.

The 45 degree area (in the center of the field) is damaged by soccer players and football players and rugby players. This park has to fulfill a lot of different roles in the community; we are trying to design it for that.

In terms of the berms, I assume you wouldn't be losing trees to make the berms larger.

Josephine explains those trees are ash or crabs and will possibly go away. We could always extend the berm and wait to raise it until the trees pass on.

Kids play behind the tennis courts tossing balls and playing Frisbee.

I love the idea of expanding the rolling hills.



Southern Mound & Ball Field

I like the viewing areas that you have with a couple different spaces to watch people playing baseball.

I like the round (space) in the center but with the buffer around it with all the trees.

I would be concerned with having the gathering areas down to the south of the baseball area. Neighbors are good about calling squad cars if people are messing in the play area. We don't go for the kids goofing around; we do watch that, we don't want that happening on the south especially with the trees.

We need some storage space for baseball, 3'x5' for a shed (perhaps incorporate it by the south west corner along the fence).

Can we keep a park bench behind the backstop

- Yes of course

ADA

Nothing has been said about people with disabilities. Is there going to be disability parking? Is the surface going to be one that people with disabilities can get around?

- Mike explains that the Park District has no control over the parking, but the park will have ramps and curb cuts, and the play ground features will have accessibility pieces as will the tennis. In fact the Park District has been ahead of the recommendations (in some facilities) in our approach to ADA.

Everything will have to follow all standards of the ADA.

Public Art

Neil Adams is the Park District liaison to the Public Art Committee. He will inform the committee of any potential spots for artwork. The committee reviews safety, materials etc.

Lighting

What is the lighting going to be like?

- Mike says we have street lighting that lights most of the park except the middle. We do have a few of our standard walk lights throughout the park. You can get into two different schools of thought regarding park lighting. One is that the more lights you put



out there the less crime, if you have too much people will be playing baseball at 11pm at night. Do you think the current light levels are acceptable and if they are not, we can slowly bump them up?

- The light levels are acceptable to the people in attendance at the meeting.

When you walk through the park at night you feel a little distance from the city. It is pretty dark and quiet and feels kind of pleasant.

- We will try to keep the light levels very low.

Jamil says we'd could make the lights more efficient/green

Paths, Bump Outs and Street Plaza

I like the (street) plaza idea but I don't know how realistic that would be.

The traffic on Euclid has picked up because of the stop light on Harvard

The site lines there at Wesley and Fillmore are (an issue), I've seen people blowing through the stop sign, perhaps make it a 4 way stop. One of the things that really affects it is that the Fenwick High School kids park big SUV's right up to the corner.

Would the bump out idea help a little bit?

Jamil says that they make plowing difficult and cyclists may have problems with bump outs as they push them out into traffic.

But this is not Jackson, it is Wesley and it has almost no traffic.

We should check to see if this is part of the proposed bike lane

Maybe a bump out with a four-way stop.

You can go to the village and request a 4 way stop and they will do a traffic study but will not put it in unless the numbers demand it.

A neighbor of the park believes that people think it's a 4 way stop already.

Drivers going east and west tend to blow through the stop sign at Fillmore and Wesley

Josephine says we did 4' bump outs at Maple.

Roosevelt is getting bump outs along the whole corridor. Roosevelt is not a bike way.

Yeah but it has a lot of traffic.

Jamil says we would propose the bump outs to the village and then it would have to go through the proper channels.

You have a few things going on at Euclid; there are often a lot of cars (baseball).

PHASING AND COST

I'm wondering about the playground, you said it is not at a point that it needs to be replaced right now. When would we talk about doing that?

- It will be in a few years.

First thing should be the drainage.

- Josephine says the first phase would probably be south of the tennis courts.

When do you think you would start work? It is scheduled for 2010.

I assume different plans cost different amounts of money.

My question is with respect to the amount of money that is budgeted to this, just to get a general sense, do these schemes each conform to what about \$380,000 cost.



- This is a master plan for the long term so some prioritization will have to be established and work carried out in phases. What is the most critical work to be accomplished? There is also always the possibility of grants that will allow us to do more.

We need 5 elements to go for grants, the tennis is one, playground 2 baseball 3, ADA 4
ADA may or not be accepted.

As there were no further comments John thanked the attendees and encouraged them to attend the next meeting.

Mr. Grandy encouraged the attendees to tell other residents and to please come back themselves. As in the past, concepts have changed from meeting to meeting depending who was present. If you want your ideas carried out you should attend. Community participation is essential to the process. He then thanked all the attendees.

Minutes compiled by Julie Erkert Smith and checked by John Mac Manus of Altamanu Inc.