

Community Meeting #1 Meeting Minutes

Date: February 22nd, 2018

Location: Stedman Elementary School



These meeting minutes summarize the community meeting held on February 22nd, 2018 with the Greater Park Hill community.

Welcome and Introductions

- Happy Haynes welcomed the community on behalf of Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) and reiterated the purpose of this process. Appreciation for the time and effort the community dedicated to facilitating previous discussions was expressed. It was reiterated that DPR understands the importance of working closely with the community to ensure that this park reflects the neighborhood character and community desires.
- Community members were asked to share questions and concerns and are summarized below.
 - Q. The community is concerned about transparency and a lack of trust between neighbors and the city regarding the park and land swap.**
 - A. There is currently no deal regarding a land swap. There is a proposal. DPR should have started this process as they are now. A main goal of this process is to build neighborhood trust and identify community desires for this park.
 - Q. What does it mean there is “no deal”?**
 - A. Land has been purchased from Xcel. There was an offer made by the developer to accelerate the park design/construction process by including the park as part of the development. The impetus for conversations with the developer was a lack of secured funding for DPR to design and build the park in the immediate future. DPR acknowledges that it was an error to co-develop a concept for the park with the developer without initiating a public process.
 - Q. How quickly would DPR be able to build the park without developer funds?**
 - A. The park would be placed on DPR’s list of capital improvement projects. Projects typically remain as a request on the list for several years until funding is secured. It is anticipated to take 2-4 years to secure funding.

Q. There is concern among long-time residents that this park is primarily for people who will reside in the new development. Will the park be open to the public? Will there be an entry system restricting access?

A. This will be a public park accessible to all. DPR has no private parks. When the park is established (fully constructed and warranty periods have concluded), it will be designated as a park. This designation ensures it is protected as a park and open to the public.

Q. The community initiated a park visioning/design process in the fall. What will happen to this work/feedback received?

A. DPR appreciates the feedback gathered by the community-led process and has the report summarizing the process and findings. DPR is not starting this process from scratch and this work will be incorporated into the DPR-led public process.

Q. Does DPR support the land swap?

A. At this point, DPR has no recommendation. This community process must be completed before DPR will make a recommendation regarding the proposed swap.

Park Experience/Programming Activity

- Steve Charbonneau described the intent of the meeting was to identify the types of experiences the community desires and the park should offer. The following describes the format for the break-out discussion:

Community-led Discussion

- Divide into small groups (preferably with other community members who are new to you!).
- Introduce yourself.
- Share a favorite park memory.
 - Why does this experience stand out?
 - How did the park contribute to this memory? Was it the "stuff to do" at the park, the gathering space, etc.?
 - Record 2-3 key points on each person's memory.
- What "experience" should this park provide the Park Hill neighborhood? Describe in terms of experience, not elements.
 - Record experiences.

Community reports back to the group

- In 1 minute, highlight key "experiences" members of your small group talked about and what made them stand out.

- Representatives from each group shared the following favorite park memories:
 - As a child:
 - Experiencing the thrill of swings and slides
 - Visiting to Curtis Park pool and the creamery
 - Feeling a sense of freedom – independence to visit the park without adult supervision
 - Gathering and playing with friends outside of home
 - Making ill-advised decisions (freedom with safety)
 - Enjoying unstructured play
 - Explorating
 - Sledding
 - Connecting/playing in water
 - Fishing
 - As an adult:
 - Walking in parks as exercise
 - Enjoying the trees and open space in the city
 - Celebrating child’s first birthday – neighbors joined in regardless of invitations, more fluid/sense of community
 - Retreating to a place for mom and dad to get a break/decompress
 - As a child and adult:
 - Playing sports
 - Attending festivals
 - Throwing frisbees
 - Enjoying family time

- What “experience” should this park provide the Park Hill neighborhood? Describe in terms of experience, not elements.
 - Connecting with nature
 - Enjoying the outdoors/open space
 - Sitting and contemplating
 - Sitting and reading (shaded spots to view play and other areas)
 - Appreciating flowers, trees, butterflies, bees and birds
 - Finding respite
 - Eating/drinking (and sharing!)
 - Climbing, swinging and playing
 - Enjoying Inclusivity
 - Connecting with neighbors and attending events (e.g., movie night)
 - Gathering and interacting with neighbors (gathering space or elements that encourage park users to speak/work together)
 - Retreating to a safe place (eyes on the street)
 - Connecting to neighbors

- Meeting participants also identified the following desires:
 - The park should be welcoming and inclusive. This could be cultivated through signs, park name, design, and programming. The park could be designed so it engages the street and reaches out to passing community members.
 - The neighborhood history could be incorporated into the park through signs, design and name.
 - Safety is important.
 - Park could be designed to cultivate interactions between users and create a place where kids and parents can be together. Interactive play equipment where parents gather (swings, slides, etc.). Elements that spark conversation or encourage park users to interact/work with each other (climbing feature, zipline, etc.).
 - Park could offer multigenerational experiences.
 - Park could feature water – the sound of water is calming and “mud and water” attract kids/creates opportunities for unstructured play.
 - The park design can ensure the community aspect by:
 - Featuring messaging around the edges of the park that highlight the “community”
 - Providing space to host events
 - Acknowledging the neighborhood history in picture or text
 - Providing ongoing, living history of our changing community
 - Creating a sense of pride
 - Featuring a thematic design that highlights history and inclusivity
 - Naming the park to reflect the community/park intent

Park Concerns and Aspiration Boards

Meeting participants were provided with post-it notes to record concerns and aspirations throughout the meeting. At the end of the meeting, participants posted these concerns and aspirations on the wall.

- What are your great concerns for the park?
 - Safety, community access, public agreement
 - Folks will visit liquor store and head straight for park benches.
 - There is a liquor store on the block, so I am somewhat concerned about people drinking and disturbing others.
 - Park feels “separate: from the rest of the block and becomes dirty with litter, graffiti, etc.
 - Consider the fact that the community has already gone through this process once already, it would save a lot of time if the plan that was developed from those meetings was presented to the group. Especially considering the fact that

the majority of the attendees here tonight were the same attendees of the previous meetings.

- Drugs.
 - The Park Hill neighborhood doesn't need another sore point to divide us.
 - That it won't meet the aspirations of the community.
 - Greater Park Hill Board voted down this development and the pocket park.
 - That a small, vocal group will force their plan, it will be adopted and not reflect the majority of the neighborhood.
 - That the land swap won't happen, and we will be left without a park because GPHC won't be able to raise necessary funds.
 - Why wasn't this a bond request?
 - Why not have both green space by developer and park at transfer station.
 - That there will be no park or we will have to wait 2-4 years for DPR to have budget.
 - The suggestion to build an 8 ft (or any size) wall. No wall. We need visibility.
 - Not big enough.
 - That City Council will assume GPHC speaks for nearby residents when NO polling was done. Many support the land swap for fast, economical build out!
 - Economically disadvantaged people will feel unwelcome.
 - We want a park not a plaza.
 - Delay of park construction.
 - A giant wall along the alley (we live right behind and want a good-looking boundary marker).
 - Regarding the land swap, I am concerned that the desires of neighbors will not be represented by the GPHC vote or by other who represent us.
- What is your aspiration for the park?
 - Play structure and shade (I support GPH's designs).
 - Monkey bars (because most parks don't have them) and basketball court.
 - Swinging and running in the grass.
 - Park is well lit at night and does not have a lot of hidden corners or structures.
 - A truly unique urban oasis to create a safe, multi-generational experience.
 - An inclusive welcoming place to gather and have community events (and trees).
 - Honor rich neighborhood history.
 - Use Matt's design.
 - Safety, public agreement for how the park is designed. Public acceptance for the park.
 - A tree to read under.
 - Neighbors meeting one another.
 - A place to relax, sit in the shade, etc.
 - A place my 10-year-old can go on his own and place my husband and I can go to.

- Open space.
- Safety, visibility, nature, gathering place, inclusive.
- Welcome to all.
- Park serves the entire community regardless of age, economic status, ethnicity, etc.
- Use the community input that's already been done.
- That we will take the developer up on his offer to develop and maintain the park, as long as he is serious about it. And I think that means that means the east side of the block – which I support because of his offer.
- That it feels welcoming to everyone nearby and not just a courtyard.
- That it will be kept clean and free of liquor bottles that can sometimes litter the block – this will help it feel more welcoming.
- Lighting for safety.
- Open space for free play.
- Shade, trees, landscaping.
- Multi-generational use.
- Movies.
- Lots of trees with tables to sit.
- The park to have a distinct feature and identity.
- The park to be on the eastside of Fairfax.
- Community movies and events.
- The park honors and shares the diverse history of the neighborhood.
- Open park to the east No wall. The alley has been a place for crime to take place.
- We are open to having the developer build, maintain and provide safety as planned.
- We are open to the design of the developer with new items identified from these meetings.
- Inclusion.
- Park provides greenspace (lawn) and trees (shade and comfort!).
- Restful, shady, reading spot.
- Open space comfortable seating.
- Implementation to occur sooner rather than later.
- A gathering space.
- Honor nature.
- A multi-generational space.
- Honor the 'small scale" of kids make believe.

FAIRFAX NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
Park Experience

What “experience” should this park provide the Park Hill neighborhood?

Describe in terms of experience, not elements.

Walkable

Respite

place to sit?

Allow imaginative play/free play

open space - grass for free play & picnics

Community gathering space

Multi-generational

FAIRFAX NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Park Experience

Share your favorite park memory!

Why does it stand out? How did the park contribute to the memory?

A birthday party at a park where kids in the neighborhood could just join in if they were walking by. No hard boundaries of ownership / participation in park events. Builds community.

Dinner picnics

Water (feature) - ^{H2O} (streams etc.) ^{memories of wading in}

Creative play - unstructured

City Park Jazz - community gatherings

Merry-go-rounds / "Big Toy" railroad tie structure to climb

FAIRFAX NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Park Experience

What "experience" should this park provide the Park Hill neighborhood?

Describe in terms of experience, not elements.

Positive Experiences

Gathering

Picnics

Movies

Meeting Place

Safe Experience

Obvious delineation

Multi-Generational Experience

Urban Experience

Negative

Feeling Institutional - No large wall

FAIRFAX NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
Park Experience

Share your favorite park memory!

Why does it stand out? How did the park contribute to the memory?

Mora - Independence to go play
Safe & fun place

Brad - Sledding in the winter
It had a hill

Matt - Exploratory adventure aspects

Paul - Proximity - freedom

FAIRFAX NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
Park Experience

What "experience" should this park provide the Park Hill neighborhood?

Describe in terms of experience, not elements.

- welcoming environment, ~~the~~ ^(★) ~~the~~ all-inclusive
- feeling
- clean
- big enough for a lot of people.
- nature
- ability to eat
- dog-friendly
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FAIRFAX NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
Park Experience

What "experience" should this park provide the Park Hill neighborhood?

Describe in terms of experience, not elements.

MEETING PLACE

PLACE FOR
SMALL GATHERINGS

WANT TO
BRING YOUR WIFE
AND GRANDKIDS

GRASSY AREA

SHADE
TO READ
AND CHILL

PICNICS

FUN

CLIMBING

COMRADE
+
CONNECTION

RELAX

FAIRFAX NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
Park Experience

What "experience" should this park provide the Park Hill neighborhood?

Describe in terms of experience, not elements.

welcoming
physically accessible
open
easy to walk in - wide opening, no gate
shade, relax, book, lunch
draws people in
not full of stuff
closer to nature
community space - place to gather together, low-key, celebration
bring food and drink
sharing food, picnics
contemplation
comfort - safety for all

Kid
+
adult

FAIRFAX NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Park Experience

Share your favorite park memory!

Why does it stand out? How did the park contribute to the memory?

playing with brothers

geese attacks! wildlife up close.

feeding ducks

riding bike, playing basketball
freedom w/ safety

Sports in Spring

live music, music festivals

movies

meeting friend for lunch picnic

throwing frisbee

walking dog

family trips to play in park

FAIRFAX NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
Park Experience

Share your favorite park memory!

Why does it stand out? How did the park contribute to the memory?

Slides, Swings, grass, Sandbox,
Trees ^(climbing) Shade, - spending a lot of time
@ Parks with our children, developing "memories",
A place to go, to escape - just to get out
of the house. - Break up the normal
Day life.