

Meeting Notes

Project: Westwood Park
Meeting Date: Feb. 2, 2012

Re: Public Meeting #1
Location: Salvation Army, 4505 W. Alameda, Denver
Date Issued: February 22, 2012
Compiled By: Paul Thomas

Present:

See attached sign-in list for meeting attendees.

Denver Parks Staff: David Marquardt, Nicole Stahly, Greg Cieciek, Gordon Robertson; LiveWell Westwood: Rachel Cleaves, Norma: Stream Design - Jess Clark, Paul Thomas

Topics Discussed:

1. General: The meeting was held to kick-off the community involvement process for the new Westwood Park. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project, obtain general preferences from attendees regarding what they envision doing in the park, and what things they would like to see in the new park, and establish a dialogue with the neighborhood that will facilitate continued communication throughout the project design process. The meeting was held in English, with bi-lingual (English-Spanish) graphic presentation materials, and with simultaneous Spanish translation of the proceedings.
 - The meeting was kicked off by Councilman Paul Lopez. He described the history of the acquisition of the park, the importance of participation/ project involvement for the attendees and neighborhood in general, and his idea of "The Four Winds" as a potential concept for the park, reflecting on the diverse cultures that make up the residents of Westwood and Barnum neighborhoods.
 - Scott Gilmore, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, also spoke about the importance of the park to the community, and how the parks department was excited to be able to provide opportunities for the neighborhood residents to enjoy a new park facility right in the heart of the neighborhood.
 - Nicole Stahly of Denver Parks and Recreation ("DPR") provided background on the City's progress thus far, which included cleanup of the park, acquisition of funding from a stalled public works project, the intent to obtain additional funding through grant applications, etc., and the hiring of a consultant team--Stream Design--to design the new park.
2. Paul Thomas of Stream Design described the existing conditions at the park site, and discussed some of the great opportunities that the site presented-- and some challenges as well. These included the great views of the City and the mountains, the prominent location (and the important bus stop) on Alameda, the steep slopes, the existing retaining wall, graffiti, etc. He discussed the need for the new park to serve a lot of different purposes, and how the park would need to be flexible to accommodate everything that people wanted.
3. Jesse Clark of Stream Design introduced the "Preference Identification" portion of the meeting, where attendees were asked to indicate their preferences regarding what they wanted the park to be and what kind of things they wanted in it. This portion of the meeting was conducted in 3 phases:

a) An initial vote of hands by the group to determine what attendees thought the main purpose of the park would be for them based on four general categories. (See Board 1 attached.) The key information derived from this exercise was the great importance placed on walking, and walking paths. This was followed by preferences to "sit and relax", and to "socialize--picnic with friends, etc. Playing a sport while in the park was also well supported, but garnered fewer votes from the attendees.

b) A "dot voting" exercise where all attendees were given three sticky dots with a 1,2, and 3 written on them (1 being highest priority). Three display boards, titled "What things do you want in the new park?" were placed where the attendees could walk up to them and look at the lists and pictures of a wide range of potential elements that could be included in the park design and vote for the things they liked or wanted by placing their dots next to that item. (See attached Boards 2, 3 & 4). The categories of items voted on included:

- Play Equipment
- Sports Activities
- Family Activities
- Natural Elements

General trends from the dot voting included:

- "Natural Elements" in general received the most votes over any other park elements, with favorite elements being trees, flowers, and grass;
- "Play Equipment" favorites included skateboard elements, play equipment/structures for young children
- Sports activities that were preferred included basketball, volleyball, and soccer;
- Favorite "Family Activities" were walking, BBQ Grill, shade, and exercise stations.

c) The conclusion of the preference identification, and the final part of the meeting, was a group discussion where attendees could voice their hopes and concerns for the park. Items voiced by attendees in this discussion included:

- A water feature of some sort was greatly desired, and was not reflected in the choices presented. Many thought that this type of feature should be added to the list of potential park elements.
- A measured walking path was strongly supported.
- Several people thought that this park should not include community gardens. Rationale was that the park was so small to begin with, and there were a fair number of community gardens in other nearby parks, and at the local neighborhood public schools.
- Restrooms were another item that many supported. (Gordon Robertson of DPR spoke to this issue, and said that restrooms in neighborhood parks like the new Westwood Park were not something that the department could offer, but perhaps a san-o-let with enclosure could be provided.)
- The range of possible landforms that could be created in the park was discussed. There were supporters of a "flat" park, and those that favored hills within the park that might be places for sledding, etc.
- Travel to the park was discussed. Most would walk, some would bike, and a few would drive. A parking lot was mentioned, but in general it was thought that it would use up too much space.
- Picnic areas were discussed. There were many people that indicated that picnic areas would be a good thing to have, but there was also concern that the picnic areas might be too popular. Questions about whether or not the park was too small for picnic sites with grills. Also concerns about picnickers bringing and consuming alcohol in the park.
- The idea of a public patio or plaza/overlook got moderate support.

- Many voiced support for art within the park, including potential murals by local artists on the concrete retaining wall along Alameda.

4. The meeting was adjourned. Attendees were told to expect another meeting in the next 3 to 6 weeks.

Stream Design believes this report accurately reflects what transpired at the meeting. Please provide comment to the appropriate project manager if you have a different understanding of what occurred or would like to add specifics or additional information. Notification should be made within 5 working days of issuing this report, after which, it is assumed that all parties agree that this report is accurate.

CC: File

BOARD 1

What is the main thing you plan to do in the park?
¿Cuál es el objetivo principal que usted planea hacer en el nuevo parque?

- Sports activity--soccer, football...? 9 people raised their hands
- *Actividad desportiva--fútbol, de fútbol americano...?*

- Relax-- sit and relax, read a book 17 people raised their hands
- *Sentarse y relajarse, leer un libro*

- Play games 13 people raised their hands
- *Jugar juegos*

- Socialize--picnic, have a party, gather with friends, etc. 17 people raised their hands
- *Socializar, hacer un picnic, tener una fiesta, reunirse con los amigos, etc.*

Walking! : 26 people raised their hands



BOARD 2

What things do you want in the new park? ¿Qué cosas desea en el nuevo parque?

Play Equipment

Equipamiento de juego:

- Swings
- Columpios



#1: 0
#2: 0
#3: 3

- Play House / structure
- Casa de Juego



#1: 0
#2: 0
#3: 2

- Skate elements
- Elementos de skateboarding



#1: 1
#2: 2
#3: 2

- Play equipment (for 2-5 year olds)
- Equipo de Juego (para 2-5 años)



#1: 1
#2: 2
#3: 2

- Climbing structure
- Estructura para Escalar



#1: 0
#2: 2
#3: 0

- Slides
- Resbaladera



#1: 0
#2: 1
#3: 0

- Play Equipment (6-12 year olds)
- Equipo de Juego (6-12 años. Edad)



#1: 2
#2: 1
#3: 0

Sports

Deportes

- Basketball Court
- Cancha de Básquetbol



#1: 4
#2: 0
#3: 0

- Volleyball
- Cancha de Voleibol



#1: 0
#2: 3
#3: 0

- Hula hoop area
- Área de Hula-Hula



#1: 0
#2: 0
#3: 0

- Kickball
- Patear el balón



#1: 0
#2: 1
#3: 0

- Jump rope area
- Área para saltar a la cuerda



#1: 0
#2: 0
#3: 0

- 4 Square
- 4-Cuadrado



#1: 0
#2: 1
#3: 1

- Soccer area
- Área para fútbol



#1: 2
#2: 0
#3: 2

- Handball
- Balonmano












#1: 0
#2: 0
#3: 0



What things do you want in the new park? ¿Qué cosas desea en el nuevo parque?

Natural Elements Elementos naturales:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flowers • Flores 			<p>#1: 4 #2: 1 #3: 0</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berm / small hill • Berma / pequeña colina 			<p>#1: 0 #2: 1 #3: 1</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grass • Césped 			<p>#1: 3 #2: 2 #3: 2</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees • Árboles 			<p>#1: 5 #2: 2 #3: 0</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boulders • Rocas 			<p>#1: 0 #2: 2 #3: 0</p>

What things do you want in the new park? ¿Qué cosas desea en el nuevo parque?

Family Activities Actividades para la familia

- Picnic area
- Área de Picnic



#1: 1
#2: 2
#3: 0

- Bulletin Board
- Tablero para Anuncios



#1: 0
#2: 0
#3: 0

- BBQ Grill
- Asador



#1: 2
#2: 1
#3: 6

- Benches
- Bancos



#1: 0
#2: 0
#3: 1

- Lighting
- Luces



#1: 0
#2: 3
#3: 0

- Plaza
- Plaza



#1: 0
#2: 0
#3: 1

- Electric Outlets
- Enchufes eléctricos



#1: 0
#2: 0
#3: 0

- Walking Paths
- Senderas para Caminar



#1: 4
#2: 3
#3: 5

- Shade
- Área de Sombra



#1: 3
#2: 2
#3: 3

- Exercise Stations
- Estaciones de ejercicio



#1: 2
#2: 1
#3: 4