

Meeting Notes

Project: Washington Park Playground & Restroom
Meeting Date: March 3, 2016

Re: Public Meeting
Location: St. John's Church & School, 700 S. Franklin St., Denver, CO 80209
Date Issued: March 11, 2016

Present: Jess Clark, Stream Design
Will Iadevaia, Stream Design
Kerry White, Urban Play Studio (UPS)
Jason Kopecky, The Abo Group
Brian Wethington, Denver Parks & Rec. (DPR)
Chris Yanez, Denver Parks & Rec. (DPR)

Summarize meeting:

The following presentation summary was provided by: Tim McHugh (Washington Park East Neighborhood Association - President)

Approximately twenty people attended the March 3, 2016 meeting at St. Johns Church on S. Franklin St. to review and discuss the status of the options for playground renovation previously presented and discussed at the November 24, 2015 meeting.

Jess Clark (Stream Design) welcomed all participants. After re-introducing Kerry White (Urban Play Studio), Chris Yanez and Brian Wethington (DPR), and introducing a representative from Abo Architecture (Jason Kopecky, restroom design), Jess reviewed the public process which led to today's meeting.

Based on the written and on-line surveys submitted after the November 24 meeting, the two most popular concepts were presented. Certain qualities considered in developing these two concepts included: 1) context and adjacency, 2) circulation and general layout, and 3) features and experience. There was overwhelming support for natural, rather than contemporary or classic aesthetics, and significant preference for nature based rather than traditional or adventure typology. The following were included into both concepts: natural materials, adequate seating, elevation into trees, access to shade, age group separation, challenging yet acceptable risk, water and sand availability, open-ended play.

Concept One, entitled Canyon Sky, relies on land forms and dirt mounds to allow elevation, and has a more serpentine layout. There are numerous connections to the adjacent promenade and a significant buffer area between play areas for two age groups, 2 - 5 and 5 - 12 years old. Concept Two, entitled Forest Journey, provides more multiple-use trails, relies more on structures than land forms for elevation and has a smaller buffer zone between age groups. This concept allows more intra-area circulation, is slightly more compressed, and has fewer connections to the promenade. Forest Journey also has a slightly larger buffer area from the picnic area than Canyon Sky.

Side by side illustrations comparing Canyon Sky and Forest Journey allowed an appreciation of their similarities and differences with respect to topography and structures, both natural and mechanical. Although details of a proposed new restroom were not formally discussed, illustrations of four variations of a building housing from 4 to 6 bathrooms were presented.

Attendees asked questions and completed surveys expressing preferences for aspects of the playground concepts and restrooms.

November 2016 is the projected onset of playground construction. Depending on weather, Spring 2017 is the hoped for date of completion. Safety improvements will be made to the boathouse playground to insure availability of this playground during renovation of the playground in the diagonal.

Comments/Questions:

Following the presentation attendees were encouraged to further explore the design concepts at graphic boards provided around the room. During this time, members of the design team and Denver Parks fielded questions and comments at graphic board locations.

1. An attendee expressed concern that there was no fence shown around the playground allowing children to wander away from the play area.
 - Another attendee commented that by providing a more engaging play environment children are less likely to wander.
2. An attendee expressed concern over the inclusion of wood in the new playground and the potential issue of splinters.
 - Jesse Clark (Stream Design) described that the use of wood in these design would not include traditional dimensional lumber but would use Robinia, a type of wood that is much harder and durable than traditional wood varieties. This wood has become very popular in recent year for playground use and is proving to be far more resilient.
3. An attendee expressed concern over the durability of rubber play surfacing and its aesthetic suitability for Washington Park.
4. An attendee expressed concern with the possibility of geese contaminating the play sand.

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