

Redesign of Coppens Square: *Decide the location of the object*

CBA Design Development Community Meeting 3

Hosted by Friends of Coppens Square (FOCS)

February 22, 2017, 6:00 p.m.

Bowdoin Community Health Center, 230 Bowdoin St, Dorchester, MA 02122

Meeting Notes

Upcoming Meeting (Potentially at the Teen Center. Final location TBA.)

Thu, 3/2, 6pm CBA Presentation – Meeting 4: schematic Plan and cost estimate

Present: Ed Cook, Jennifer Johnson, Geoff Doerre, Fred Maloney, Davida Andelman, Karen Charles Peterson, Earl Taylor, Linda Loska, Louisa Kulynych, Domenic Accetta, Christina Lanzl (notes)

1. Welcome and updates (Ed Cook)

Ed Cook welcomed the CBA team, Clara Batchelor and Megan Tomkins, and invited participants to introduce themselves. He explained that once the design is finalized FOCS will submit an application for fabrication funding to the Browne Fund and to other potential funders. At least five letters of support from elected officials and civic leaders are being sought (e.g. Dorchester Historical Society, First Parish and St. Peters, Friends of Ronan Park, Bowdoin Geneva Neighborhood Assn., Meetinghouse Hill Assn.).

Goals for this meeting

To decide on the location of the object for Coppens Square

2. Presentation by CBA Landscape Architects: Renovation Design Possibilities for Coppens Square (Clara Batchelor and Megan Tomkins)

CBA will develop a design proposal and cost estimate that can be presented to potential funders.

CBA prepared four options for Coppens Square showing different locations for the preferred feature. CBA felt it would be important to review the location, so that this question cannot be raised later as being unanswered.

- CBA will reuse the granite setting of the current fountain
- Review design of corner sitting area with bus stop at NE corner
- Park is surrounded by water lines but the maps are not entirely clear as to usable water supply. Include cost for new water line to the fountain in cost estimate.

Q: Can one truck in water instead of a water line?

A: A water line will need to be placed because water does evaporate.

OPTION 1

Fountain stays in place. The focal point, seen from all directions. In the center the fountain would bring people

OPTION 2

Locate the fountain along the side centering it on the northern edge, along Bowdoin Street

Q: What is the aesthetic value of locating it there?

A: Fountain may be more accessible

OPTION 3

Northwest corner at Bowdoin Street and Adams Street: this option would provide nice access.

The danger is that the fountain would become the “private” realm of the closest properties and residents.

OPTION 4

Locate the fountain at the northeast corner, where the sitting area now exists.

Q: The park is very small. Concern about safety if the fountain is located at the edge. Therefore, the safest location is in the center. Vehicular traffic tends to be known for ignoring red lights and many pedestrians cross.

Q: Does the location of the fountain impact other elements or uses?

A: Plantings or number of benches/seating opportunities will not be impacted.

3. Design Decision Votes and Directions to CBA

Ed proposed to entertain a motion to vote on maintain the current location of the fountain and was seconded by Geoff. The motion was unanimously adopted by all participants.

Proposed: signage in paving surrounding the fountain with interpretive text etched in granite

Precedents:

1. Dr. Loesch Family Park Jump Rope (renovated by CBA): features text
2. Vendome Firefighters Memorial (Ted Clausen): memorial texts on granite memorial

Comment: Davida reminded everyone that the sensitive inclusion of the diversity of the neighborhood is being reflected in any interpretive text.

Q: Could a band of text run on the sidewalk along the perimeter? Ideas for text include the local ties to the abolitionist movement, the beginning of public education (Mather School), women’s rights...

A: CBA will have a more final proposal of integration of text in proposal, but that will not be the final version.

Q: The original idea was to feature bringing water to the city of Boston. Concern was raised that this small park would be overloaded with history.

A: Ed related that the original fountain had statues of the 4 seasons. An idea to create a contemporary setting would be to include 4 diverse women's lives who made a difference locally from various ethnic backgrounds.

Ed made a motion to use the pavement to some end in the future, seconded by Karen. All were in agreement with one objection that favors a traditional approach.

CBA spoke with Robinson Ironworks, our potential fabricator. The ring of nozzles pointing up on the original fountain should not be recreated because the nozzles clog. Better is water feature that guides water to fall down. By the next meeting CBA will present Robinson Ironworks drawing(s) of a potential fountain for Coppens Square.

[Robinson Iron Works website: www.robinsoniron.com](http://www.robinsoniron.com)

CBA will follow up with the company to obtain catalog of available fountains.

Fabrication timelines

6-month process for reuse of existing molds

12-month process for creation of new mold

Bronze patina options

Ranging from green to brown.

Design Wish List for the Fountain

Precedent: shallow basin with 1-inch: Rose Kennedy Greenway with jets pointing up.

Q: CBA asked whether the group was looking for these types of jets.

A: The group decided unanimously to not include jets pointing up. The fountain's main purpose is not intended as a children's play feature. Serenity and calm are sought.

LIGHTING

Q: Add lights to base of fountain?

A: The group unanimously voted yes on lights. The goal is to light the fountain and the water coming down with long-lasting LEDs. CBA proposes to hire lighting consultant for final placement of LED light fixtures.

Light fixtures should be placed around the perimeter of the park. FOCS favors traditional fixtures. CBA thinks that the 10-11 acorn light fixtures could be provided by parks, provided standard Parks fixtures are used.

Four fixtures are currently installed near the seating area only. The goal will be to extend them around the entire park.

PLANTINGS

Q: Plantings, such as perennials and shrubs are often favored by residents. Boston Parks would not maintain these plantings. The idea is to get year-round interest.

Proposed:

1. Perennials: tulips get weaker every year, while daffodils get stronger. Also their bulks are not attractive to squirrels. DBA would choose a variety of daffodils that is naturalized for lawns.
2. Flowering trees, e.g. magnolia, cherry
3. A beech used to be in Coppens Square—a good option because beech is a slow growing species.
4. Bartlett Pear tree? They were originally cultivated in Dorchester. CBA suggests hybridized fruiting trees that bloom but do not bear fruit. Historically, Dorchester had apple and pear orchards. Crab apple may be an option.
5. Rose bushes: tend to collect trash and do need maintenance.
6. Witch hazel blooms in early spring/February and would be a great option.
7. Are grasses an option? CBA does plant grasses but they do need maintenance, such as cutting and weeding.
8. Can coniferous tree at the center be removed, perhaps replaced with another shade tree? Remember to maintain sight lines. The tree is large and was probably originally a holiday tree. It interferes with the fountain. Five voted in favor with two opposed. Karen suggested walking the site before making final decisions.

The question is what is the overall design intent for the park? Is it supposed to be a lawn with trees? Should the corners be delineated with plantings?

Q: Can CBA provide planting options?

A: CBA will provide planting options and recommendations with the reasoning for them at the next meeting.

PAVING

Granite proposed around the fountain itself. The design is supposed to last.

BENCHES

CBA proposes black steel. The group felt that they are cold to sit on. Wood would be preferable to residents. Perhaps, the existing benches could be used by simply replacing the wood.

BUS SHELTER

FOCS could request a Wall advertising bus shelter from the MBTA.
CBA can show a shelter on the drawing.

In the final design CBA will provide renderings

- Plan
- Sections
- Cost estimate

Final design drawings will need to be developed during final design with

Landscape architect

Mechanical engineer

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