

**Paula Titus Park  
Community Meeting #1  
Meeting Held Over Zoom on January 19, 2021 at 6:00 pm**

**Attendees:**

Nathan Frazee, Project Manager, Boston Parks and Recreation Department (BRPD);  
Cristine Brandao, Outreach Coordinator, Boston Parks and Recreation Department;  
Kaila Bachman, Principal, CBA Landscape Architects;  
Jocelyn Wolff, Landscape Designer, CBA Landscape Architects;  
Charles Titus, Paula Titus' Husband;  
Various (Neighbors, Family Members of Paula Titus; See Sign-up Sheet).

**Presenters:**

Nathan Frazee:

- Introduced the meeting and provided a brief overview of the project goals, schedule, current design funding provided by the Community Preservation Act (CPA) for the Paula Titus Park Master Plan.

Charles Titus:

- Gave a brief history of how the site has been used by the community over the years, as well as some information about his late wife, who was a long-term resident of the neighborhood. Discussed how the park could evolve to better suit the community needs by becoming a gathering space that promotes community interactions and socialization.

Kaila Bachman:

- Presented site context and analysis, as well as precedent images to show potential programming and site features for the space.

**Community Feedback:**

Below is a summary of the questions and comments brought up for discussion during the meeting, organized by topic:

Passive Park Programming:

- Community members voiced interest in keeping flexible open space at the park to facilitate community gatherings. In the past, the park has been used for impromptu movie nights, volleyball games, and informal barbecues with temporary tents. There was concern that if too many elements were introduced, the space will be unable to accommodate these uses in the same way and the park might feel crowded. Features

that can serve multiple functions like game tables were favorably received.

- Since there are several formal and informal performance spaces in nearby parks, meeting attendees did not think a performance area such as a raised platform was warranted at this site.
- The new park should have a “wow” factor, and be attractive to both the neighbors and visitors from other areas.

#### Vegetation:

- Boston Parks and Recreation Department (BPRD) typically only has maintenance capacity to maintain trees, lawn, and perhaps some shrubs. However, at other BPRD parks, more elaborate/extensive garden beds with perennials are maintained by Friends Groups. Currently, a Friends Group does not exist for Paula Titus Park, but organizing gardeners that use the community garden across the street may be a viable start for a Friends Group.
- Some vegetation between the park and the neighboring properties is desired, but open sight lines into the park should be maintained.
- One resident expressed concerns about fall leaf cleanup if new trees are planted. Another resident and member of the Margaret Wright Community Garden said they would be happy to clean up the leaves in the fall. This task is also something that could be carried out by a Friends Group.
- A suggested design idea was to have a winding walking path that passes through a small grove of trees.

#### Shade Structures/Trees:

- The site currently has very little shade, making it uncomfortably hot during some parts of the day in the summer.
- Meeting attendees supported the incorporation of a shade structure into the park design.

#### Lighting:

- Residences suggested incorporating landscape lighting such as light bollards or wall lights. Because the parcel is in a dense residential area, large scale lights are inappropriate for this park.

#### Circulation, Fencing, and Paving:

- BPRD prefers to provide two entrances for each park in the city, wherever feasible. At a second access point, a set of stairs might be necessary due to the slope of the site. BPRD stated that the abutting sidewalk may not be ADA-compliant due to the slope of the street, but that there will be accessible routes within the park itself.
- Residents are interested in replacing the existing chain link with decorative fencing.



- Fencing, site elements, and circulation routes should be configured so that open sight lines from the street into the park can be maintained.
- Asphalt and non-decorative concrete paving materials were not favorably received by the community. One resident suggested using local stone as a paving surface. BPRD and CBA explained that natural stone might be used as a paving accent, but may not meet accessibility standards for a walking surface and it maybe be cost-prohibitive.
- Several attendees supported the incorporation of decorative/ornamental entrance features, such as a metal arches or columns.

#### Dog Use:

- The site is currently used as an informal off-leash dog area.
- A neighbor voiced concern over off-leash dogs at the current space and nearby parks. They stated that dog owners frequently disregard posted signage about leashing dogs, and that more enforcement from the City is needed in the area.
- If this site were designed as a dog park, it would need to be a sole use space for dogs (BPRD requires a minimum of 6,000 sq. ft. for a dog park). The acquisition of the property by the Parks Commissions was with the intention of creating a passive park, not a dog park.

#### Sculptural and Play Features:

- Some sculptural and decorative features were included in CBA's presentation, which led to a discussion of incorporating public art into the space. While the installation of public art is under the jurisdiction of the Boston Art Commission and could not be designed/included directly in the construction of this park project, a space that could receive a sculpture or art feature could be incorporated into the design. Then, after the park construction is complete, the community could engage the Boston Art Commission to help bring public art to the space.
- The community has many young children and families. The incorporation of 2–5-year-old play equipment in the park's design was favorably received. There was a preference for smaller, more subtle play elements or features, rather than a larger structure.

#### Signage:

- The park should include a monument or plaque to honor Paula Titus and describe her role in the community.

#### Seating:

- Meeting attendees were open to including different types of seating, such as benches, seat walls, and tables. There was a preference for seating that is more comfortable, especially for longer periods of time, and can be used easily by park visitors that are older or have mobility impairments.



- BPRD works with the City's Age Strong Commission to ensure that park designs are inclusive for elderly residents.

General Project Questions:

- Community members inquired about future funding. BPRD reviewed the typical funding request process for Capital Improvements Projects (CIP), but also state that alternate funding sources, such as CPA funds, may be available is CIP funds are not awarded to this project.
- At the next community meeting, CBA will present schematic design options that will be based on the design feedback received at this first meeting. Meeting attendees will be able to discuss the options and ask questions, indicate preferences, and give feedback to which element of each design would be preferred for the file park design. At the third meeting, a Preferred Design will be presented, which will reflect the feedback given in Meeting 2.

END OF NOTES

Prepared by Jocelyn Wolff, CBA Landscape Architects LLC, 01/21/2021.

