

**Paula Titus Park  
Community Meeting #3  
Meeting Held Over Zoom on April 29, 2021 at 6:00 pm**

**Attendees:**

Nathan Frazee, Project Manager, Boston Parks and Recreation Department (BRPD);  
Cristine Brandao, Director of External Affairs and Marketing, BPRD;  
Kaila Bachman, Principal, CBA Landscape Architects;  
Jocelyn Wolff, Landscape Designer, CBA Landscape Architects;  
Various (Neighbors, Family Members of Paula Titus).

**Presenters:**

Nathan Frazee:

- Introduced the meeting and provided a brief overview of the project goals, schedule, and current design funding provided by the Community Preservation Act (CPA) for the Paula Titus Park Design. He then went over details for the procurement of the park's construction funds that will be put forward by Mayor Kim Janey in the next capital improvements funding meeting to be voted on by the Boston City Council.

Kaila Bachman:

- Gave a brief summary of the Community Meetings #1 and #2 including site context, analysis, the three schematic options presented at Meeting #2, as well as key feedback from the meetings that drove the preferred design. She then presented the preferred design accompanied by precedent images, and described the proposed park elements in more detail.

**Community Feedback:**

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

Planting:

- Concerns were raised that it looked like there were too many proposed trees for the size of the park, particularly in the center part of the park between the lawn and plaza. Several residents expressed their opinions on the benefits of trees, such as adding more shade to the site, which is very hot and open. Some supported including "as many trees as possible". One person suggested investing in a smaller number of larger trees instead of a bigger number of smaller trees. CBA suggested removing some trees shown in the center area of the park so that the space between the plaza and lawn was more open, and there was a positive response to this suggestion.

- In Meeting #2, neighbors requested that trees be planted along the northwestern edge of the park to replace a vegetated buffer that had previously been there. During this meeting, community members discussed in greater detail what the buffer would look like. One neighbor requested a shorter tree species be used in this location. A uniform species in this area was preferred (as opposed to mixing different species to get a variety of heights).
- One person inquired if any of the funds allocated by the Preservation Act were given for investment in native plantings. BPRD stated that CPA does not specifically allocate funds for native plants, but BPRD and CBA typically specify many native plantings for new park projects. Community members expressed interest in using native and adaptive plant species for the meadow and trees.
- Questions were raised regarding tree care, specifically watering. BPRD stated that they water trees for the first 2 years until the trees are established.
- A neighbor suggested the use of trees with smaller leaves that will not require as much leaf clean-up in the fall.

#### Furniture:

- There was more interest in tables that were semi-movable rather than non-movable.
- Many people preferred benches and seats that have backs, rather than backless benches. The benefit of backless benches is that they can be used from either side, but backed benches are usually more comfortable and suitable for a wider range of users. CBA and BPRD will make sure that benches and seats with backs constitute the majority of the seating on the site.
- In previous meetings, community members requested natural muted colors. During this meeting, there was a discussion whether some brighter natural colors could be introduced in the site through furniture. Community members agreed and suggested colors like purples, greens, blue, teal, and general earth tones. Several people stated they preferred not to have colors like red or orange used for this purpose.
- Community members were split between a pergola that was more traditional or contemporary. There was general consensus that a more traditional pergola would fit the historic neighborhood more, but many people preferred how the contemporary pergola looked. A friend of Paula Titus stated that she had been a contemporary person. CBA will design or select a pergola that had a mixture of contemporary and traditional features (sometimes referred to as a “transitional” style).
- Some community members said that the game tables at nearby Alvah Kittredge Park are not used, and questioned whether game tables would be used at this site. BPRD explained that there are tables that use perforations to make up the game board, and that game tables can also be used as regular tables.

#### Paving and Drainage:

- Since the first meeting, Community Members have expressed interest in including more detailed paving patterns. There a positive response to including a brick or concrete paver decorative banding as a border to concrete walkways.
- A neighbor suggested installing pervious paving to help mitigate water runoff from the



park into neighboring properties. The same neighbor voiced concern over having a large impervious surface in the park that could lead to water runoff issues. Feedback received after the meeting reflected this concern as well, and emphasized that any paving needs to be done in a way that does not exacerbate runoff towards the neighboring residences.

- Community members requested paving that would withstand time and elements well, citing a nearby park with exposed aggregate concrete paving that has begun to crumble and fail.

### Fencing and Entrances:

- The preferred design has two public entrances. The existing western corner entrance will be a flush entrance. The eastern corner entrance will be a pathway up the hill that is interrupted by several small sets of steps. Community members agreed that the existing western entrance will remain the main entrance to the park. Questions were raised if an archway at the main entrance was too grand of a feature for a park of this size. CBA suggested other more subtle decorative features at that entrance.
- Community members suggested a softer, more contemplative entrance at the eastern corner with more natural decorative features.
- A neighbor expressed safety concerns over having an entrance so close to the parking entrance of the abutting neighboring property. BPRD tries to ensure two points of access in parks for safety reasons. For addition safety and by request from the community, both of the park's entrances will be gated.

### Play Features:

- Some community members supported the introduction of musical instruments to the park, while others questioned if neighboring properties would find the sounds intrusive.
- One community member stated that at the recently renovated playground at Lambert Avenue, children use sticks against the play equipment that make unpleasant sounds. However, they said that when used as intended, musical instruments have a pleasant sound.
- Some neighbors thought the tot lot was unnecessary due to the proximity of larger playgrounds nearby or those that will soon be under construction. The proposed tot lot features are on the smaller side and are multipurpose (steppers can be used for exercise or seating), but CBA will revisit eliminating some of the features and making the space smaller while maintaining required play equipment safety zones. It should also be noted that the hillside play area was developed to make more of the site usable without adding large retaining walls.

### Dogs:

- Someone asked whether dogs would be allowed off-leash at this park. BPRD requires dogs to be leashed at all parks. As discussed at other meetings, in order for this park to be designed as a dog park it would have to be a single-use space for dogs only due to its size. The CPA grant funding for the park's design specifies that the park is to be designed mostly as a passive neighborhood park.



- Some residents requested off-leash hours for dogs at this park, since the current space is used by neighborhood families to exercise their dogs.

#### Utilities:

- A community member inquired if trash cans would be installed and maintained by the BPRD. BPRD responded that trash cans would be installed and maintained at entrances and/or main gathering spaces.
- Another neighbor requested a dedicated dog waste station be installed at the park to encourage dog owners that walk their dogs in the neighborhood to clean up after their pets. This suggestion was supported by several other members of the community. BPRD can look into installing a station but cannot supply bags for these kinds of stations. Residents responded that the dog owners in the neighborhood can take responsibility for refilling the bags.

#### General Project Questions/Concerns:

- Several residents asked about general maintenance. BPRD explained that while BPRD can maintain lawns and trees, extensive perennial and/or shrub plantings are typically not specified for Boston parks unless there is a dedicated Friends Group that commits to maintaining the smaller plants. Christine Brandao, Outreach Coordinator with the BPRD, can help organize a Friends Group and can answer any questions on the process.

END OF NOTES

Prepared by Jocelyn Wolff and Kaila Bachman, CBA Landscape Architects LLC, 5/21/2021.

