

To: Nathan Frazee, Boston Parks & Recreation Dept. **Date:** December 13, 2021
From: Tanya Pande + Monique Hall, BSC Group **Proj. No.** 23263.30
Re: Winthrop Playground, Roxbury

Date of Meeting: December 8, 2021 **Time:** 6:00pm – 7:30pm

Place of Meeting: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Purpose: Winthrop Playground improvements

Project Team Attendees: Boston Parks & Recreation Department:
 Cathy Baker-Eclipse, Director of the Capital Plan
 Nathan Frazee, Project Manager

BSC Group:
 Monique Hall, Landscape Architect
 Sing-Ning Kuo, Landscape Architect
 Tanya Pande, Landscape Designer

Item	Discussion
Project Team Introduction + Attendees	<p>20+ people attended the meeting outside of the project team, including DSNI Members. The meeting started at 6:00 pm with Nate introducing the project team to the meeting attendees.</p> <p>Councilor Elect Fernandes Anderson was in attendance and shared contact information.</p>
Project Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boston Parks & Recreation Department provided an overview of the park's location, the scope of the project, and project boundaries along with the project timeline: Design and construction documents in spring 2022, construction in summer 2022, and park opening in early fall 2023. • The park's design will encompass the City of Boston initiatives, safety guidelines and environmental regulations, Parks & Recreation goals, and community input. • Boston Initiatives include: Inclusion, shade, access to the parks, drinking/water bottle filling stations, water play and climate resiliency. • Parks & Recreation goals include preserving and protecting existing trees, expanding usable park area, improving universal access, enhancing park visibility, improving access to parks, and designing flexible, multi-functional

ACCURACY NOTICE
 We have sought to record accurately the minutes of this meeting. If any of the above items do not agree with your understanding, please contact us within seven (7) days from the date of this document.

Item	Discussion
	<p>park spaces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 5 Elements of Play: Examples of the 5 elements of play were given. New playgrounds shall seek to incorporate as many differing play elements as possible as each type provided different benefits.
<p>Site Analysis & Existing Conditions</p>	<p>Site Analysis – presented by BSC Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to public parks and playgrounds: Most nearby parks consist of playground and basketball court uses. Site Diagram: Reviewed project limits, existing park program, fencing, lighting, sun and wind diagram. Circulation: Park access points, accessible routes, non-accessible routes, and school access routes were shown. <p>Existing Conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play equipment: The playground areas have exceeded lifetime play value. There are limited play elements at the toddler area. Opportunity to update worn safety surfacing. Splash Pad: Water play is limited to a single spray feature. Fitness Equipment: Fitness equipment does not meet current standards. Site Furnishings: There is an opportunity to update worn and outdated site furnishings. Paving: Court paving is worn, cracked and has drainages issues. Accessibility: There are issues with accessible routes and paving transitions throughout the site. Retaining walls: Cracked retaining wall along Dacia Ave needs repair. Lighting: Existing light poles have both LED and incandescent fixtures. Trees: Existing trees appear to be in a state of decline and some nuisance trees have grown into the fenceline on the south.
<p>Park Amenities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playground Equipment: The project team showed inclusive playground equipment for 2-5 years and 5-12 years age group with a variety of play elements. Splash Pads: 4 options were presented for the splash pad area, which explores spray head options, surfacing and interactive play with the water Playing Courts: The team pointed out the underutilized tennis courts and discussed vibrant and inviting color schemes for the existing courts. A suggestion of a multi-sport court was also presented.

Item	Discussion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track: Idea of having a toddler/tike track was presented which could run around the park's perimeter. • Fitness Equipment: Fitness equipment options were shown, which portrayed a clustering approach and a spread-out approach with an opportunity to advance practice using QR codes/apps which show options for using the equipment and/or tracking personal workout progression. • Seating: Team presented bench seating option with arm, backrests and side tables, wheelchair accessible table seating and game table options. • Park Edge Delineation: Team discussed different fence and bollard options, and potential and ways of softening park edges. • Accessibility: The design team presented the opportunity to eliminate stairs, and provide sloped walks – where possible.
Listening and Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park Layout Options: A few attendees wanted to see park layout options. The project team responded that park layout options would be presented at the next meeting. This initial meeting was to gather feedback from the at-large community – understanding what the park needs are, what works, what doesn't work. One person asked the project team to consider how the new park can encourage social gatherings. • Accessibility: Many people pointed out the accessibility issue from Dacia street and throughout the park. • Safety: A person noted that trees/landscape areas attract undesirable activities. • Lighting: There were several comments about the need for consistent lighting throughout all park areas. A person pointed out if the park lights could be automated and be bright at night where the park is dark. There were multiple comments about the park lights not being on when as soon as it gets dark. • Tennis Court/Multi-sport Courts: Many people pointed out that the tennis court is underutilized and is missing a net. The majority of comments favored either a multi-sport court or eliminating tennis altogether. There were a few comments in support of tennis, with one person suggesting partnering with Tenacity to offer more (equitable) tennis programs. Alternative suggestions included having a grilling area with tables and benches – as this is how the area is sometimes used. One person requested if there could be another basketball court as it is high in demand. Some people liked the idea of a multi-sport court in this area as a replacement.

Item	Discussion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball Courts: In general, the basketball courts are heavily used. There were several comments to add more basketball courts, and consider youth courts. A painted mural on the courts with bright colors was favorably viewed and several comments mentioned Project Blackboard as an example. Consider inspirational quotes from Red Auerbach and other coaches. • Color Scheme: There were several comments about the significance of color and the need for bright and playful colors - for community ownership and to make the park inviting to kids and families. Specific colors that were mentioned include royal blue, purple, orange and kelly green. • Play Equipment: There were several comments about the need for updated play equipment including several favorable votes for multi-person swings and one strong vote in favor of single user swings (to include bucket swings). Other play elements mentioned included slides, see-saws, merry-go-rounds, spring riders, and playground climbers. Some comments favored a climbing net, some comments were not in favor. Harambee Park and Esplanade were mentioned as good park examples. • Splash Pad: In general, everyone is excited for a new splash pad with multiple spray features. This amenity is great for both kids and adults alike. • Fitness Equipment: There were a few comments that favored the fitness equipment at Mary Hannon. One person pointed out that they prefer the play equipment clustered at one place. Another suggested having exercise equipment that is age inclusive, including the elderly. • Gathering area and breakout space: A person pointed out about having a garden area with seating that elders could use for knitting and for passive recreation. Gardening would be nice. People also requested for picnic area along with grilling. • Dog Park: A few people mentioned a need for a separate location for a dog park, also raising a concern that they don't want people to walk their dogs in this park (adjacent game tables, unsanitary for kids). • Park Edge Delineation: People were interested in softening the edges instead of fences and mentioned that this area should not be boxed in. An open concept is favorable. Eliminate fencing where possible. • Perimeter Path: There was support for a perimeter path around the park.

Item	Discussion
	<p>The path should have color. If an option for a perimeter track at the courts is presented, then consider resilient track surfacing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating + Site Furnishings: People liked the idea of having wheelchair accessible tables (with 3 seats) but also provide tables with 4 seats (for 4-player games). They also liked the idea of having play incorporated in the table. Provide areas for people to read, crochet, other passive activities. Provide combination trash and recycling bins. • Retaining Wall: It was commented that the retaining wall is falling down and missing a corner. • Safety: In general, safety is a concern inside the park as well as getting to the park. There was a request to provide speed bumps to slow down vehicular traffic. Boston Parks responded that roadway improvements are not within the reach of this project. The community can reach out to Jeysaun Gant with the Office of Neighborhood Services (jeysaun.gant@boston.gov) • Trees: There was support to inspect the trees for health and safety issues • Mural at Retaining Wall: It was noted that the existing mural wall was in good condition, but the mural could use refreshing. Boston Parks commented that the City of Boston's Mayor's Mural Crew is the appropriate resource for this work and has already reached out to them to coordinate.
Closing Remarks & Next Steps	Nathan Frazee wrapped up the meeting with contact information to be found in the meeting agenda and informed people about the follow-up meeting with Design options scheduled for January 19, 2021 (corrected from Jan 17).