



Community Meeting Notes

Meeting Number: 1
Project: BBF Pathways
Date: October 12, 2022
Attending: Nate Frazee (BPRD)
Mike Doucette (KZLA)
Kyle Zick (KZLA)
25-30 public community members

1. Will pathways be the same materials or are new materials on the table?

New materials are on the table.

2. Will Climate change impact guide design?

Yes, climate change will impact the design of this project. Addressing areas of stormwater flooding, reducing heat island affect by using and/or avoiding certain materials, etc.

3. What is the timeframe of the project?

A year for design work and another year for construction. Construction may start in the summer or fall 2023

4. Will funding of this project go to, and possibly overlap with Army Corps of Engineers Muddy River restoration work?

Army Corps scope for the flood mitigation was to restore pathways to the pre-construction condition. The pathway project will consider changes to the path alignments, materials, etc.

5. What is the schedule on the Army Corp of Engineers Muddy River Restoration project?

Work is anticipated to be complete in March 2023. Agassiz Road will be addressed as a part of this scope.

6. Typical Boston Parks and Recreation projects have (3) public meetings, will this project follow that format?

This project will have (3) traditional public meetings but will have supplemental meetings with various stakeholder (Victory Gardens, Fenway Alliance, ENC, etc).

7. How will our opinions be heard?

Online surveys, questionnaires, possibly even design options posted with voting methods and other means that are typical with BPRD projects.

8. Will the meeting notes and inventory existing condition maps be available online?

Yes, this information will be posted to the Parks and Recreation project website.

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9. What site furnishings will be included in this scope of work?

This project will take into consideration some site furnishings that are adjacent to paths. It will not include sports fields/courts, playgrounds, etc.

10. Will the City of Boston's new staff and Green New Deal have a role with this project?

The City staff is newly in the Green Infrastructure position, so no communication has been made yet.

11. Recent ADA/pathway improvements to Malcom X Park affected some existing trees, how will this project impact trees?

This project will be transparent about anything that could affect the existing trees. We have an inventory of the trees and spent time reviewing that in conjunction with this project. We will avoid tree removals, unless necessary. Trees that are to be removed will have thorough explanations and will be clearly identified.

12. Will there be different design/layouts for the pathways or just new materials?

Yes, a pathway could be redesigned. Some examples could be if a path has worn shoulders, do we make it intentionally wider? How do we incorporate bike traffic? Etc.

13. A lot of park users nearby and are in favor of certain material changes to the pathways. Are permeable materials in consideration for replacements?

Yes, permeable materials are on the table.

14. Are new bridge(s) in this project scope?

Yes, the Evans Way bridge will potentially be replaced as it has received a CPA grant.

15. Option for a pickleball court?

Next summer BPRD will be conducting community engagement for sports courts but that will not be a part of this scope of work.

16. Are there concerns with using concrete for pathways in terms of an environmental impact?

Yes, with any material choice we will look at the aesthetics, initial costs, maintenance costs, material life, and environmental impacts.

17. The pathway slope leading to the MFA is not in compliance with ADA guidelines.

Yes, this layout was installed per the 1970's master plan, but we will study alternatives to make this compliant. The bridge over the Muddy River also has a slope greater than allowable by ADA, but the state issued a variance allowing it.

18. Could bridge widths be changed with this scope of work?



It is too early in the project for us to decide if altering the bridges is within the scope. Once we prepare a cost estimate we will be better able to identify what is included in the construction project.

19. City rules and regulations, say that the park is closed at night, however there is a lot of park users and people walking through in the evening. Will lighting be a part of this scope?

Yes, we will review the existing lights. We will consider different styling, typologies and review different illumination types. Changes in lighting policy are not part of this project.

20. Will light pollution be considered while selecting new fixtures?

Yes, we will consider using cutoff light fixtures to limit light pollution.

21. Will the old Evans Way bridge that was removed will be reviewed as a part of this scope of work?

Yes, we will look at aesthetics, size, etc to activate that part of the park.

22. There is a hidden area behind the berm adjacent to Clemente Field. Currently there are some negative activities that take place there because of the lack of pedestrian traffic. If you restore/activate the bridge, that negative activity might be deterred.

23. Will this project be sensitive to adding unnecessary paved surfaces?

Yes, we will only have paved surfaces that are needed.

24. Are the existing pathway's conditions the main factor of what pathways are replaced/relocated?

That is considered, but not the overall answer. If a pathway is in good condition, but the alignment does serve current needs, we will consider re-aligning the path.

25. Could amber toned lights be used along the Muddy River for the turtles in the area?

We will consider appropriate light color temperatures for this area and other areas of the park.

26. The pathway from the MFA to the bridge near the MFA has a lot of use. There are issues with the crosswalk coming from Museum Road/Fenway, the site lines are poor and dangerous, it ices in the winter, parked cars created obstructions from the pedestrian traffic to vehicles. Will addressing these issues be included in this scope of work?

DCR Parkway renovations will not be included in this scope of work. We will coordinate DCR owned sidewalk issues, curb ramps and some other issues with DCR.

There is a DCR Parkway Master Plan, Fenway may be included in that document.

27. What site furnishing elements might be associated with this project scope?

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The main scope of this project is pathway improvements. Furnishings, lighting, etc. adjacent to the pathways will also be reviewed and improved.

28. Would there be a consideration for exercise equipment to be added near Clemente Field?

We could bring that discussion to BPRD, however, the priorities would most likely lie with items such as benches, trash receptacles, bikes racks, drinking fountains etc.

29. We are concerned about the stonedust paths with granite curbing because it creates trip hazards, retains water, creates an awkward footing, etc.

We will study the detailing of this path.

30. Shouldn't separate bicyclists and pedestrians due to the added speed that this adds to bikers. Could different paving materials be used to delineate pedestrian vs. bicycle use? Could intersections where bicyclists cross pedestrian paths be a raised table?

We will study how bicycling will be accommodated.

31. Conflicts at the bridge near Japanese Bell, this bridge is too narrow. This area has always been a pinch point, especially when biker/moped traffic use it.

32. The Japanese Bell needs to be reset as it is settling.

We will review and note this.

33. Could bollards be used at bridges to slow bicycle traffic?

We will study this.

34. Pathway near the War Memorial has puddling.

We have noted this and will be studying all pathways drainage.

35. Could you consider using the Tower Hill Botanical Garden as a precedent for the lighting and stabilized stone dust for this project?

We will look into this and other places as precedents too.

36. Eustis Estate in Milton MA, has nice lighting that could be used along the Muddy River.

We will look into this and other places as precedents too.

37. The Massachusetts Historic Society building has a nice ADA ramp incorporated into the building, something similar could be designed for the War Memorial.

We will look into this and other places as precedents too.

38. Are pathways in between garden plots in this scope?

As of now, all pathways are within the scope.

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39. (2) gardens within the Victory Garden (accessible garden and pollinator garden) are not accessible and need ADA pathways to them. Could that be addressed in this scope?

This could be addressed within this scope

40. Vehicular traffic is present at times throughout the Victory Gardens, this would include some deliveries of large trucks. We would like to keep this vehicular access but discourage public vehicular traffic.

41. There is flooding every spring in multiple areas of the garden. One area in particular is the area that the Army Corps has been using as a staging area and built it up. Will the Army Corps be restoring this area back to existing conditions?

As we understand, it was the Army Corp's scope to restore all pathways and connections back to existing conditions.

42. Could lights be added along the path between the Victory Gardens and the Muddy River?
Can the existing lights in the Victory Gardens stay on all night?

We can coordinate with BPRD about adding lights in areas with current low levels, but historically, Back Bay Fens was intentionally not completely illuminated.

43. Could an irrigation line (piping) be run to the entry gardens?

Yes, we can coordinate that

44. Could we create a distinction to the entry of the Victory Gardens that incorporates and includes the bulletin board?

We can look into this.

45. There is a planting plan that was developed for the entry garden, that included rabbit fencing, but funding fell through.

46. Could a drinking fountain be added near the entrance of the Victory Gardens?

It will be considered.

47. Garbage trucks always go off the pathways in the Victory Gardens due to the width of the paths.

We will study this.

48. Trash barrels are an issue in the Victory Garden, limited barrels (8 down to 1 during the Army Corps project), non-animal proof barrels, could more be added?

We will consider and study this. City of Boston has standardized trash and recycle style barrels that are animal proof.

49. Is there any data on bicycle and pedestrian accidents or incidents within the park?

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We are not aware of this data, but will look into it.

50. We are not in favor of separating bicycles and pedestrians because it encourages bicyclists to travel too fast in this passive park. High speed cyclists should remain on the Fenway.

NEXT MEETING: TBD