



WARNER LARSON
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Hardiman Playground 1st Community Engagement Meeting

Project: Design Improvements to Hardiman Playground
Meeting: In-person
Location: Hardiman Playground - 380 Faneuil St, Boston, MA 02135
Date: September 23, 2023
Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Attendees: Boston Parks and Recreation Department (BPRD): Lauren Bryant, Project Manager
Warner Larson Landscape Architects (WL): David Warner, Sameer Bhoite, Amy Allen, Yuxiao Liao

Purpose: The purpose of the meeting was to understand any concerns park users had to share about the park along with ideas for park improvements. BPRD and Warner Larson presented 4 boards highlighting the following:

- Board 1 - Site Context and Adjacent Parks
- Board 2 - Existing Site Issues
- Board 3 - Current Park Uses
- Board 4 – Ideas for Park Improvements

Discussion heard from participants:

- General notes
 - Need bathroom.
 - Occasional issue with trash, cigarette butts
 - Park is well used.
- Little League field
 - Conversation with Allston Brighton LL President
 - Lots of trash after YMCA use
 - Has coordinated with BPRD maintenance: Leo Boucher/Gary Dwer
 - Need netting at play
 - Basketball adjacency- noise and sometimes profanity from basketball users, not compatible with young baseball players
 - No spectator access - interrupts game
 - Foul ball hazards: Into play area, bubbler on field side of fence, spectators standing along walkway,
 - Drainage at infield. Structures in field, safety issue
 - Other fields - good and bad issues
 - LL fields the league uses: Smith, McKinny, Ringer and Hardiman
 - BPRD needs to sequence renovations to always keep at least 3 fields in use.
 - Rogers when available (unofficial dog park), Volo, BSCC
 - Smith field 3 has bad sun angle.

- T-ball is very popular.
- Drainage ditch on 3rd base side
- There used to be storage bins for the little league.
- No good place for parents to watch games. The bleachers in dog area are not used.
- Parents line up along fence between field and play / basketball area. They lean on the fence.
- The field is in a poor condition and overused by neighbors, YMCA, and dog walkers.
- Play area / Splash Pad:
 - Better splash pad – surface is slippery and retaining wall is dangerous + slippery. Kids have gotten injured there.
 - ADA swings
 - Currently slides are too high off the ground and launch kids.
 - Risk play is important.
 - There used to be infield mix storage at the tot-lot near the softball field under the trees. The location was not ideal. Too close to fence and public sidewalk. A sandbox could be located underneath other play structures.
 - The shade trees in the playground are nice.
- Basketball Court:
 - Heavily used especially in the evenings.
 - Need additional seating.
 - Some shade would be nice.
- Dogs:
 - Occasionally, dogs are seen off-leash in the little league field. Some noted an issue with people not picking up after their dogs.
 - Occasionally, dogs are seen off-leash in the play area.
 - A formalized dog park would help.
- Site Context:
 - Issue with traffic and crosswalk into playground entrance – there's a bus stop on Faneuil Street. Cars will go around the stopped bus and then pick up speed as they approach crosswalk.
 - Parking is too close to the crosswalk – cars cannot see people waiting. Dangerous for people with strollers
 - Mother's + children's shelter up the hill on Dunboy Street (Perthshire Road) – Hastings House (EMPath)
 - Moms and kids come to this playground and use the crosswalk at Faneuil Street to access site. They walk down Adair Road
 - Library opening nearby – currently under construction

Comments from the boards:

- Activities:
 - Like small & large structures
 - Lager gate, good for strollers
 - Roller skate on basketball court
 - Eat dinner at the park.
- Issues:
 - The bridge in the play area is steep.
 - Oil the swings
 - Child proof gate
 - Prune dead branches.
 - The water splash pad gets clogged all the time.
 - Kids tend to be younger.
- People's favorite surrounding parks:
 - Cypress street playground (Brookline)
 - Artesani playground (Brighton)
 - Smith playground (Allston)
 - Joyce playground (Allston)
 - Lincoln Park (Somerville)
- Ideas:
 - Little League field:
 - Keep field, no dogs anymore.
 - Needs improvement-new benches, drainage, and storage.
 - Bleachers in dog area can go.
 - Playground/waterplay:
 - A couple more swings, ADA swings, ride-on swings
 - Splash pad
 - Sand pit or activities
 - Rubber surfacing for water play, better water squirt not surrounded by a concrete wall.
 - Jungle gyms for both <5 & >5-year-olds kids
 - Balancing activities, lily pads, walls, balance beams, climbing structures.
 - Higher slide, circular slide, water slide, launch pads for the slides need to be end nearer ground, slides should be fun and high but end on ground.
 - Some smooth concrete areas are nice for chalking.
 - Risk play is smart play.
 - Handrails/Ninja warrior
 - Signage - Kevin's Background
 - Basketball Court
 - Keep and improve the court.
 - Need additional seating at basketball court
 - Site Amenities/Landscaping
 - Shade over the swings & courts

- Toilets
- Keep trees and add more shade.
- Picnic tables
- Better flashlight at crosswalk to park, car speed through it
- Slow traffic – makes Oak square a 20-mph zone for pedestrian safety.
- Formalize dog park:
 - Formalize dog park but signs of no dog entry in other areas.
 - Put in grass and digger space.