



Ringer Park Phase 1 Improvements Community Meeting #3 – Zoom

September 26, 2024

Boston Parks & Recreation Department held a Zoom meeting for the third Community Design Meeting for Improvements to Ringer Playground. The design team shared design concepts for park entrances and program area layout, along with playground equipment options and dog run furnishings. We recorded the following feedback.

Feedback

Each comment noted below is a comment from one community member. Responses from BPRD or the design team in *italics*.

Lighting

1. Some of the light fixtures have disappeared since the lighting assessment, some of which are located by the West End House / Boys and Girls Club. *Parks will look into this, but it's believed that they were removed for repairs to be made.*
2. The lighting at the basketball and tennis courts makes it challenging to use when it's dark. *Parks are technically closed from dusk to dawn, and because of the residences adjacent to the courts, and previous issues with night time activity at these courts, the lights were disconnected and Parks does not have plans to reinstate them.*
3. Against the idea of new lighting fixtures.

Pathways and Entrances

1. The sidewalks above the tennis courts should be suitable for truck loading. *They will be.*
2. I like the open field, and the walkway re-alignments. What will go where the existing walkways currently are? Would like to see more of a picnic area/ gathering space. There are lots of scooters racing around the park, which is a safety concern.
3. Are there any plans to make new pathways wider? *Key pathways that Maintenance uses will be wider, to ensure that trucks won't break the pavement edge, the way that they do now.*
4. Could the pathways be wider and designed as mixed-use paths?
5. Ringer Park pathways are not open for bikes and scooters, but they still use them. This is a safety concern.
6. The mixed-use pathways are for pedestrians and maintenance, not for scooters and bikes.
7. At the entryways, there should be something in place to restrict and slow scooters and bikes. *Parks will look at this - we don't want to impact wheelchair accessibility.*
8. What will take place of the pathways that are relocated? What will picnic area look like? There should be fencing and/or buffers for the abutters.

Dog Park

1. Interested in a new dog Park.

2. The proposed layout options are well liked. Overall, option 2 or 3 are preferred. Like the dog park in a higher location. If the dog park is at field level, we don't feel it will be utilized.
3. I like the idea of the dog park away from ballfield (options 2 and 3).
4. Why not locate the dog park behind the tennis courts? *Parks is trying to balance many parameters for the dog park. One of them is area/square footage, one is distance to abutters. In this part of the park, the open space where a dog park would go is too close to houses, and would be very small, in addition to posing conflict with existing trees, so this area is not in consideration.*
5. Having the dog park at a higher elevation will prevent conflict.
6. I like the grade separation between the dog park and the field/playground.

Playground and Splash Pad


1. I like playground at field level.
2. Option 1 is preferred. The kids at the playground are elevated and away from busy parts of the park.
3. A larger playground is preferred over a larger dog park.
4. Like the idea of options 2 or 3 with the playground at field level, and a gathering space for intergenerational use.
5. Like options 2 and 3. The playground is far more accessible and visible from other parts of the park.
6. The current playground location creates separation and protection from scooter traffic.
7. Would like the playground to have fencing to enclose it.
8. Like options 2 and 3 with the playground at street level, and the dog park is more isolated. The orange path would not be needed in option 3 if the playground were to be expanded.
9. At the playground, is water recirculated for splash pads? *No, it would require too many filtration systems and be too costly.*
10. Should be using lower flow water features. *We aim to use as little water as possible.*
11. How exactly do the splash pads work? Are they button activated? Can access be controlled to restrict usage? *Button activated, which results in about a 4-minute cycle.*
12. Would like to see playground equipment that is mixed age use, and perhaps ping pong tables or chess tables. At the existing playground the water system didn't work for years. The new playground shouldn't include anything that's easy to break or vandalize, to minimize maintenance and replacement.

General

1. The circle is worn due to the Viking group. Overall, the Ringer Park identification idea is well liked.
2. Would like to see the circle at Ringer Park become a gathering space or a performance space with seating.
3. The Viking group had ruined the grass in the circle, could they use a different space?

4. Like the idea of a recreation field, playground, and dog park.
5. There should be a picnic area in all options, not just when the playground is at field level.
6. By adding a picnic area, it could potentially discourage people from cutting through in option 3.
7. Will there be any new water fountains around the park? *Yes, Parks can provide this; there was a request for a new one at the basketball courts, and we'd need to provide one at dog area, and by playground.*
8. There should be planting buffers, to screen the fence.
9. Would like to see a community garden or a food forest to increase food access. *BPRD cannot manage these and must rely on community groups for maintenance. Parks to coordinate with group present at meeting, for further exploration of idea.*
10. The original comprehensive plan mentioned a pollinator garden. Would be interested in this and can help facilitate. *BPRD couldn't maintain this and would need community groups to steward.*
11. Everett St. pollinator garden is a good example and includes some walking trails. Glass and trash are a big concern in these types of gardens, the addition of lights could be helpful.
12. Currently there is only one variety of tree in Ringer Park. New plantings should include a more diverse planting palette.
13. Like the misting post for multiple generations. Will the survey be shared for playground features? Could a survey be completed, and could the West End House could contribute? *Parks will work with local groups (WEH and others if applicable) to survey kids and find out what preferences are for playground and park features.*
14. Overall, the park is great but people drinking and doing drugs in woods is a huge concern. Does BPD currently patrol the area? *On occasion yes, when there is consistent need. We can coordinate this, but a continued regular presence is not possible.*
15. Boston Food Forest has a steward program and train the community. They also design community spaces like stages or chess tables. They also do pollinator gardens.
16. Is the community center still in the building? *Councilor Breadon confirms that they are.*
17. There is a city council meeting about programming for the community center.

Summary of Zoom Chat During the Meeting

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 00:34:35 | Hello! |
| 00:47:35 | Why no lighting changes to the courts? |
| 00:47:43 | ^^ |
| 00:48:26 | Has there been any discussion with the Viking/LARP folks. |
| 00:48:38 | Reacted to "Has there been any d..." with  |
| 00:50:49 | Also, on mixed use paths will there be bikes allowed? In prior neighborhood |

meeting there was objections to bikes in the park, currently not allowed per park rules. Also, will motorbikes be able to continue to access?

- 00:52:00 Good evening Bob, I can follow up on your comment regarding the Vikings issue.
- 00:52:36 Makes sense on the lights.
- 00:54:31 Please feel free to reach me at Corey.mcmillen@boston.gov with any questions or concerns.
- 00:54:33 The lights I was referring to as missing are on the path up from Allston st towards courts in the right.
- 00:57:23 I just want to voice community support for the welcoming and inclusive nature of the Vikings who gather in Ringer Park. I hope we can find a way to find a way to share the park with the Vikings in a sustainable way.
- 00:57:41 Reacted to "I just want to voice..." with ❤️
- 00:58:00 Ditto on Molly. I like watching them and they are nice in explaining what they are doing with onlookers
- 00:58:16 Reacted to "I just want to voice..." with ❤️
- 00:58:58 Reacted to "Ditto on Molly. I li..." with 🙌
- 01:00:38 I really love the idea of a community gathering space with seating!
- 01:00:50 Reacted to "I really love the id..." with 👍
- 01:00:58 Reacted to "I just want to voice..." with ❤️
- 01:01:06 Reacted to "I really love the id..." with 🙌
- 01:01:50 Size of the field could accommodate U-10 soccer, for reference
- 01:02:29 Yeah people will make due with no lights since it's the closest park for many but it was more a matter of confusion for many of us who were not around when the first petitions concerning the lighting of the courts were circulating. So we hoped to find an answer. Also language intentional or not disagreeing with who hangs out in the park and who doesn't seems rather counter productive to this meeting of making it accessible and a place of community.
- 01:02:49 Reacted to "Yeah people will ma..." with ❤️
- 01:02:55 Reacted to "Yeah people will ma..." with 👍
- 01:04:34 I'm in favor in #4. Why move the playground so far over?
- 01:04:41 Is there a reason why the picnic area only accompanies the playground on the lower level?

- 01:06:04 I like the proximity of the playground to the field space - for groups / families with kids who span playground- and field-ages; I feel it better co-locates the programming
- 01:06:14 Reacted to "I like the proximity..." with ❤️
- 01:07:29 I love the idea of incorporating a picnic area into any of the designs. The current dog park is well used, so it seems like a bigger dog park is best
- 01:07:40 Reacted to "I like the proximity..." with ❤️
- 01:07:59 Do you have the approximate square footage for the different dog park layouts? May be helpful to know roughly the size of each option
- 01:08:09 Reacted to "Do you have the appr..." with 👍
- 01:08:48 Reacted to "Yeah people will ma..." with 👍
- 01:10:31 Replying to "Do you have the appr..."
- 01:11:12 My screen is small - I had not realized it was already on the image. Sorry!
- 01:12:36 The playground will be more accessible if brought down to the field level. As someone else pointed out, kids could be using the playground AND the open field and parents could keep an eye on both.
- 01:14:02 Reacted to "The playground will ..." with ❤️
- 01:14:08 I agree with Zeth and Molly's points - Options 2 and 3 seem best for the usage. Lisa K. Just made this point as well.
- 01:14:18 Reacted to "Yeah people will ma..." with ❤️
- 01:15:45 Pea stone is terrible for dog paws. :(
- 01:15:52 Reacted to "Pea stone is terrible..." with ❤️
- 01:17:02 And makes it difficult to clean up after the dogs.
- 01:17:50 Loving option 2 for the reasons many have pointed out already. Biased against option 3 only because I like how #2 keeps a large open natural space on the east side
- 01:18:08 I think that's a great point, Nathaniel. We have noticed lots of motor vehicle traffic in the last. Very loud and disruptive.
- 01:20:26 Reacted to Loving option 2 for ... with "👍"
- 01:22:15 Not totally sure, #2 might also preserve some excellent sledding paths that go into those trees today
- 01:22:18 Reacted to "Loving option 2 for ..." with 👍

- 01:30:41 I'm sure the owner wouldn't mind getting a new fence if the city will pay for it.
- 01:31:30 Replying to "I'm sure the owner w..."
- 01:31:40 All park users would also benefit from some assisted rat mitigation measures on the property in question.
- 01:31:52 Reacted to "All park users would..." with 👍
- 01:47:03 I second Sandra's plug for Boston Food Forest. I am also a volunteer on the food access committee. Boston Food Forest has stewarding model. They set up community space for gathering as well.
- 01:47:50 I would love to have a community garden in the park.
- 01:48:05 Absolutely. We would maybe think about a food forest which is completely community led. Happy to follow up via email!
- 01:53:22 They have a crew of volunteers to weed and water the pollinator garden on Everett.
- 01:53:54 That's the Pollinator Network! We have partnered with them too. Happy to get folks involved in that. The whole idea with these gardens/ food forests is to use permaculture design and bring community members together to steward the land
- 01:53:55 <https://www.pollinatornetworks.org/> is the website for the group that runs the Everett St site 🐝
- 01:55:24 Reacted to "<https://www.pollinat...>" with ❤️
- 01:55:33 I second Sandra's plug for Boston Food Forest. I am also a volunteer on the food access committee. Boston Food Forest has stewarding model. They set up community space for gathering as well.
- 01:57:08 Thankyou Rita! Sorry about the zoom sound issue.
- 01:57:25 And the community space can be chess tables, amidst green space, community events and celebrations
- 01:58:32 I find that the tire swing is popular in some playgrounds
- 02:01:13 Let's try one more time for me to speak
- 02:01:24 I'm also happy to help facilitate discussions with BPD on these issues. Feel free to reach out with some details: kevin.lherrou@boston.gov
- 02:03:57 We would love to help! I work at weh
- 02:04:44 Thanks Kristin! I'll reach out
- 02:04:56 The community center is still in the building. They didn't move to Brighton HS as planned.



02:05:45 Abigail.chatfield@boston.gov

02:07:43 If the Community Center stays, then Rosie Hanlon would be a good contact for the playground and play field.

02:08:00 Definitely! I work with her too, so I'll get in touch

02:08:09 Also, any impact to Tenacity program next summer?

02:08:57 Thank you everyone.

02:09:07 Reacted to "Thank you everyone." with 🎉

02:09:15 Reacted to "Thank you everyone." with 🎉

02:09:28 Thank you

02:09:32 Thanks!