

Meeting Notes

from: Abby Derick
date: April 14, 2026 at 6 PM
project: Porzio Park
meeting: Virtual Community Meeting #1
present: Lauren Bryant – Boston Parks and Recreation Department
Sean Sanger – Copley Wolff
Emily Hunt – Copley Wolff
Abby Derick – Copley Wolff
Approximately 30+ Community members

Lauren Bryant began the Community meeting by introducing the project team, and providing a brief recap of the City of Boston's priorities and goals for parks and recreation.

Emily Hunt presented the site analysis of Jeffries Point/ East Boston existing conditions at Porzio Park, and opened the discussion to the community, and the following items were discussed and/or noted in the chat:

General Questions/Comments from the neighborhood group during the presentation, with sentences in quotes from the chat transcript:

- Presenter Question: Which of the existing basketball, handball, tennis, and hockey courts are used? Which are not used as much?
 - The hockey court is used a lot, and there is a yearly tournament in August. Residents noted they would like to make sure the hockey court will be available this August.
 - "We use the hockey rink all the time with several neighbors."
 - "Tennis court used regularly."
 - "Tennis court is used all the time! The hockey rink is also used - for a variety of purposes... the handball court ends up being a waiting area for the tennis courts."

- Presenter Question: Which areas of the playground are your favorite? What could be added to make you want to play more?
 - An attendee voiced concerns about tree branches growing into the kids' areas, and the potential for children being hurt. They inquired if those branches could be pruned.
 - "We live right next to the park, our kids love the park and it's in a great location but it's just old and run down... the tan bark is not good. It's a lot of unused space for a playground. Could be a much more dynamic play area."
 - Many other attendees voiced their dislike of the wood chips and Lauren explained that Boston Parks no longer uses woodchips and the new playground would be poured-in-place rubber safety surfacing per Boston Parks standards.
 - "Love the swings, wish that the surface was not mulch. Love the creative terrain at the play space on the corner of Lamson and Sumner."
 - "Upgraded water play for the kids would be great, it hasn't worked in a while."
 - "The shaded canopy at Piers Park II with water feature is a big hit."
 - "Hi just a comment that there is a fair amount of dead space both in the playground and the picnic tree area. It could fit another tennis court or an enclosed dog park or even a pickleball court."
 - "We spend a lot of time in the water area during the summer, it might be worth considering ways to make the surface a bit safer."

- Presenter asked about the existing community memorials and how the project can preserve what is important to them?
 - The memorial bench with the plaque was noted as being important and that it should be preserved in the future park.
 - "I appreciate how the memorials preserve some sight lines/ green spaces along the waterfront specifically. We like having water facing picnic tables and benches."
 - An attendee noted preserving the memorial mural on the handball wall.

- Presenter asked about the seating options at the park and how they could be improved.
 - In the summer, many neighborhood families use the picnic tables on Fridays for impromptu gatherings where the children can run around together. But they don't need a single large table, they like having many picnic tables.
 - An attendee said that they like having benches and picnic tables that face the water.
 - "I use picnic benches but they are never all in use at once. Maybe we will need that many once the park is improved and attracts more people. Benches facing water is nice."

- Presenter asked about the existing lighting in the park, and if it meets their current needs.
 - “The corridor from Everett st to the waterfront is very poorly lit at night - feels like a safety concern.”
 - “Would love some warm down lights like at the golden staircases as opposed to aggressive white fluorescent. Or seasonal Edison lights on trees.”
- Presenter asked about which entrances people used the most when going to Porzio Park.
 - “We use Jeffries street entrance. Love walking down the corridor in the fall when the trees are yellow!”
 - People agreed with this in the chat.
- Presenter asked if there was enough shade in the park and would more trees help.
 - Many people chimed into the chat saying that more trees would be great.
 - “Maybe in between the basketball court and the field”
 - “Especially with the airport so close. Trees are nice.”
- Presenter asked what types of courts the public would like.
 - One attendee asked if hockey could be combined with soccer on the court.
 - “Maybe reorienting the tennis court to accomodate another space for tennis or pickleball. There is a lot of dead space in the picnic table area.”
 - “I love ping pong, but outdoor ping pong tables are more for show. No one ever uses them. Adding another pickleball/tennis would be good. There’s room. Protect the street hockey. Rare commodity. The current lawn would be used by people more if it were maintained.”
 - “Agreed outdoor ping pong on an area that is right near the harbor, means you are constantly battling the wind.”
 - “We are strong advocates to protect street hockey, my family plays regularly with other neighbors who live here. It would be fun to flood it in the winter time for skating!”
 - “I’m a big hockey fan and really appreciate the rink and how passionate folks are about it (and rightly so!). The challenge with single use spaces, especially ones that large, is that the opportunity cost is quite high. It means the space can’t be used for any other purpose even during long winters when the rink and tennis courts are unused.”
- Presenter asked about seating options in the park and what people would like to see.
 - An attendee requested benches that were metal instead of wood so that children wouldn’t get splinters. And that the play area is rearranged so there are areas for older kids, little kids, and toddlers. And if there could be a swing area and a water play area.

- “Picnic tables with shade structures would be great!”
 - Many people agreed with this comment.
- “We gather here in the summer by the picnic tables and invite families to join. We will have 30-40 families and prefer more shade and a few tables to commune.”
- Presenter asked about what types of equipment they would like to use in the park.
 - “Definitely water play/ misting station would be great.”
 - Many people in the chat agreed with the need for water play.
 - One attendee asked for less formal playground spaces, that were unstructured for children to create their own spaces and get messy.
 - “Water play is great in the playground or in some fenced in/protected area. Massports piers park has a water park but it’s littered with geese droppings.”
 - “Need both toddler and school aged play . I think concrete step can go if you have benches.”
 - “Kids love swings. The concrete step was always used to just sit on.”
 - An attendee showed interest in fitness equipment for older kids.
- Presenter asked what type of programming or other uses they would like in the park.
 - “Would love to see more activation of the space! Live music/sunset series where neighbors can meet up on weekend nights would be great. Also the idea of a community play box (basketball/frisbees etc similar to what is at Pappas Way) The space currently feels too hard/cold with all the hardscape. Need more landscaping that’s taken care of. The lighting alongside the playground path is really poor and doesn’t feel safe after dark. Lastly, accessibility along Sumner street is not great with a stroller. After you pass between bollards and bench (next to tennis backboard), you have to go into the street to get by. There is not enough space on the sidewalk to continue walking straight in the sidewalk w/ a stroller.”
 - In the chat, many people were interested in music in the park events.
 - Three children called in to ask for: Grass areas for different sports, a zipline, four square area, a lower basketball hoop, a colorful play structure, and swings that go really high so you feel like you’re flying.
 - People loved these suggestions in the chat.
- Throughout the meeting, there were many comments about dogs and dog parks, which have been grouped below.
 - “Good evening, Lauren & All, Thanks so much for gathering community input. It’s sincerely appreciated. I reached out to Kevin shortly after seeing the initial notification for this meeting to express specific interest in dog-friendliness. For dog parents in Jeffries Point, it’s difficult to find suitable, off leash options for our furry friends. The closest option is the Rt 1A underpass near Santarpio’s

Pizza on Chelsea St is roughly 1mi (a 20m walk) from Porzio. I would also say that the condition of that area is pretty rough. It would be incredibly helpful to have an option closer to home. I agree with folks that the use of other areas, including the “lawn” and hockey court, is entirely inappropriate for dogs. I’ve been a past culprit given the lack of other options. I would very much like to have a proper solution available for folks.”

- An attendee said that they don’t want a dog area near backyards because they are loud and get very smelly.
 - “No dog parks every park has become a dog park. We need more human only parks. We don't have yards for the kids to play in. Dogs have overrun brophy, porzio, the Greenway, the stadium etc. when my kids were little they couldn't crawl on grass due to the dogs.”
 - “The open lawns are defacto dog parks because they are not well maintained and not inviting... so I don’t think they really get used by humans at this point.”
 - The lawn by Marginal Street has become a dog park.
 - There were many comments that the kids’ play areas and the hockey rink are being used for dog areas and aren’t being cleaned up.
- Additional comments:
 - There used to be a historic beach connection at Porzio and they want to bring that back. The attendee noted they have lived near the park for decades and have seen changes and are excited to see the park renovation.
 - “Would love access to the water in the bay, it’s great to walk along during low tide.”
 - An attendee asked what the timeline was for the park renovation. Lauren answered that this is the first of three community meetings, which will be held over 3-4 months. Then the City will ask for construction documents to be drawn. The earliest possible construction start would be Spring 2027.

These notes are written to the best recollection of the author. Any amendments to the enclosed notes should be sent to the designers within seven (7) days of their receipt to ensure that an accurate record of the described proceedings is provided.