

McKinney Park Community Meeting #2

June 6, 2016 @ 6:30

Saint Columbkille Partnership School Library

Attendees:

Cathy Baker Eclipse, BPRD Project Manager

Clara Batchelor, Principal at CBA Landscape Architects, LLC

Jessica Choi, Landscape Designer at CBA Landscape Architects, LLC

Various Community Members—See Sign-up Sheet

Presentation:

Introduction by Cathy – 2nd of 3 public meetings to create a vision for McKinney Park

The Master Plan is funded through the capital budget

Overview of BPRD Design Principles

Presentation by Clara –

Meeting 1 Recap – Context, Existing Conditions, Site Analysis

Design Options (overview of 3 Schematic Master Plans)

Community Feedback/Discussion

Community Feedback/Design Suggestions:

Miscellaneous

- Comment – batting cage was supposed to be improved and funding was secured but never implemented.
- Comment – scoreboard will be solar-powered.
- Observation – trees along perimeter appear wild; others more intentional. (Designs have tried to preserve as many of the existing trees as possible).
- Comment – fencing around play equipment area will be 4' high.

Parking

- Comment – According to neighbors of Faneuil Gardens, during game days, majority of people drive to park and on street parking gets full quickly; overlap of fields would help relieve on street parking.
- Question – Are the 5 parking spaces worth it?
 - Response – A few spaces will not solve the issue; general consensus to leave parking out of the park.
- Question– Should we widen the vehicular path a little for coaches to be able to pull in?
 - Response – Coaches can park on street.

Sports Fields (Ball and Soccer)

- General consensus for 3 fields.
- Observation – Softball fields are played by adult softball teams, Allston-Brighton Schools, RBI League.

- Comment – Baseball backstop used to be where existing drinking fountain is.
- Suggestion – if we move the baseball field back, put a taller backstop.
- Observation – Baseball field permitted to Boston Public Schools; Brighton highschool uses it the most.
- Question – Are there outcroppings on site we should be aware of if we plan on pushing the little league field further north and carving away more land?
- Comment – One neighbor believes the higher part of the site has been mostly fill.
- Observation – Soccer seems to be played the most.
- Comment – Soccer Field will be chalked.
- Concern – Soccer Field should not overlap into any infield.
- Response - remove parking, reconfigure pathways a bit, and pivot soccer field to be able to fit into space without overlapping with other fields.
- Observation – lots of kids/neighbors end up using the small soccer field at Columbkille School; would be nice to have 1 large (150'x300') designated soccer field in the park.
- Observation – Columbkille play area has been a great success; known as the “Turf” and a safe meetup for kids, parents, neighbors to play.

Courts

- Suggestion – don't need tennis; several are being added elsewhere.
- Suggestion – space for street hockey should stay.
- Response – not much space to include a standard sized hockey court; multisport court (offers basketball and hockey) would be ideal and better for youth with its smaller size.

Circulation and Site Elements along Perimeter Path

- Concern – benches along paths will attract unwanted users.
- Comment – (CBA/BPRD) benches will have a middle armrest, which also helps the elderly with mobility.
- Observation – most people bring lawn chairs during game days; don't need as many bench seating.
- Comment – perimeter path should keep people moving along (walking, running, jogging).
- Comment – people cut-through park from north to south to Brighton Center; may be nice to have benches along path; (also provides a more leisurely experience).
- Comment – perimeter path defines a safe route during games.
- Comment – CBA will look into providing additional paths through the park; a cut-through could take place through play equipment area for example.
- Comment – CBA will provide direct access to playground from Faneuil St.
- Concern – picnic tables/gathering areas along the path will invite negative behavior, especially behind baseball field.
- Response – CBA will make sure not to include gathering areas along perimeter path, away from street.
- Comment – Simple exercise equipment will provide episodic activity along path without inviting negative behavior; they also cannot be removed.

Lighting

- Question – Should we consider pedestrian lighting for those who use the park as a cut-through?
- Suggestion – provide lights with cameras
- Comment – likes the southern entry steps shifted more towards the middle of the hill
- Comment/Suggestion – lighting should be shielded on one side to not interfere with abutters
- Comment – need more input from abutters and field users
- Comment – lighting will affect park usage/hours in the following ways:
 - provide more hours of play into the later parts of the playing season
 - right now the park closes at dusk; with lighting park may close at 11 with adults and older kids using fields
 - with pedestrian scale lighting, park would close around dusk, but people can still cut through the park
- Comment – if there's a game, the whole park would be lit (not just one specific field)
- CBA/BPRD will study the lighting issue further

Notes by Jessica Choi