

Peters Park – Improvements to Pathways and Lawns February 15, 2018 Meeting Summary

How do people use the park?

- Dog Park, the actual dog park and walking one's dog through the entire park.
- A pleasant place to pace through.
- Socializing.
- Sports.

Comments mentioned by almost all groups.

- Keep the trucks out of the park!
- Trash can be brought to the edges if it keeps the trucks out.
- Keep people and trucks from cutting the corners of the paths.
- More and better plants are needed but not between dog park and Washington Street sidewalk.
- Protect plantings – frustration with maintenance was expressed.
- Water is needed for the health of the plants.
- Some are in favor of turning desire lines into official paths, especially northeast of the ball field, others are not.
- More benches, ping-pong tables, or chess tables but others are worried about homeless people hanging out in park.

Recommended approach to responding to communities input.

- Control edges. Add fences and/or bollards along edges but make sure maintenance vehicles can cut across park once they are in it.
- Once trucks can't drive into park, repair the lawn and cut across areas.
- Interesting and durable plant palette.
- Water is needed and not just one hose bib, is irrigation possible?
- New paths to replace desire lines.
- New furniture and game tables where appropriate.
- Palette of materials should blend with existing park.

End of Summary.

Peters Park – Improvements to Pathways and Lawns
February 15, 2018
Clara Batchelor – Notes from Small Group

How do people use the park?

- For passive recreation, enjoying the open space. (Commented by several people.)
- Dog walking but not in the dog park. (Commented by several people.)
- Baseball, a baseball coach was in our group.
- Dog Park. (Commented by several people.)

Comments about what people like most in the park.

- Diversity of activities.
- Opportunity to enjoy open space in the City.

General Comments:

- City needs more green space.
- Elliot Norton Park's planting is successful.

Problems.

- Gardens need to be improved. Gardens need to be protected.
- There is significant damage to lawn by maintenance trucks.
- Trucks drive anywhere they want.
- Dog waste is not picked up enough and the trucks drive over the lawn when they do pick it up.

Specific Recommendations

- The park should be irrigated.
- There should be electrical outlets in the passive park area and in the dog park.
- Plant strip along Washington Street in front of dog park is not a high priority.
- No more benches are needed.
- Desire paths should be made official or blocked.
- Stone dust was not a material that people liked.
- Improve the drainage throughout the park.
- Cobble stones at corner could be used.
- Plantings should be designed to attract birds and butterflies.
- A sensory garden would be a good thing.
- Signage at entrances can help people with dementia.
- If fences area added they should be similar to the Blackstone Park fence.
- Art elements should be incorporated into the fence.
- Art elements should be used to stop trucks from entering the park. Trash receptacles should be moved to the perimeter of the park so trucks don't need to end

- The highest priorities for the Friends Groups are:
 - a. Keeping Trucks outside the park.
 - b. Irrigate the park.
 - c. Add an official path behind the ball field where one has been warn.

End of Notes.

Prepared by C. Batchelor, 2/16/18



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February 16, 2018

Megan Tomkins – Notes from Small Group

Feedback on Existing Conditions

- Park is very high use and has a very urban character.
- Park has transient character (people move through it, rather than visit.)
- Main Path was originally a street.
- The Friends Group installs plantings (perennials and shrubs.)
- No lawn grows under trees in passive area (area with plantings.)
- Planting bed along Washington Street/dog park is too shady and BPRD maintenance has destroyed previous plantings.
- Baseball storage box and grass is a mess – not a priority/part of this project.
- BPRD maintenance vehicles drive into the park and destroy the lawns and paths.
- Desire line path along the back of baseball field should be left as is, not made an official path.
- Perimeters along Shawmut and Washington should not be fenced – fence will not be respected.

Suggestions for Renovation

- Consider using more “urban” surfaces, like stone dust or hard paving (not grass) in high use areas/entry areas.
- Irrigation would help the shrub/perennial plantings.
- Better edging for shrub/perennial planting area – as in Ringgold Park.
- Add to playground – small playground structure was suggested.
- New paint on walls at handball court.
- Improve “infrastructure” - this participant really meant the useable elements of the park, like the painting or playground above, when he used the word infrastructure.
- Reseed lawns.
- Create maintenance plan.
- Add more shrub/perennial gardens.
- Add a raised bed to grow annuals.
- Bradford Entry could have a nicer entry or an arch – coordinate with the Browne Fund? - this is not a top priority.
- Bradford edge could have a fence – but participants don't think this is a top priority.
- Move trash cans near park entries at Washington/Shawmut to prevent BPRD maintenance from driving into the site.
- Add big belly trash cans.
- Include elements that will last for a long time.

How do you use the park?

- Dog park
 - Not limited to the grassy area, but all walking paths as well
- Thruway
- **Community gathering spot**
 - Socialize with neighbors
 - Watch different sports
 - Tai chi ladies
- **Sports complex**
 - Baseball
 - Basketball
 - Tennis

What are the biggest issues?

- **DRIVING IN THE PARK**
- Lack of maintenance
- Lack of funding for projects
- Trees are killing the grass
- **Washington Street entrances**
- Flooding at Shawmut entrance
- **Desire path along East Berkeley**
- Water access for gardening

What would you like to see?

- **Dedicated path along E Berkeley**
- Protection of trees
- New path connecting passive walking loop to Bradford Street
- **Addition of benches and tables to encourage community gathering**
- **Boulders on corners of path to prevent corner cutting**
- Curbing along western edge of playground to prevent mud sliding onto path
- Moving Peters Rock to a more visible location
- **Plaza along Washington Street**

How do you use the park?

- Baseball – South End Baseball's home field is Peters. It's an integrated and diverse league that serves the whole community. They were the State Champion recently. Peters is a showcase and in the spotlight.
- Watch Baseball games
- Dogwalk
- Basketball
- Tennis
- Abutter on Washington St
- Friends of Peters Park
- Commuter – pass through
- Observe 6am tai chi on the courts

What are the biggest issues?

- There are so many areas with potential
- Irrigation on the baseball field
- Nighttime homeless population in the park – primarily between the baseball field and Shawmut Ave. Also use the dugouts. There does not appear to be a major needle problem.
- The path behind the baseball field is the 2nd most used pathway (first is Paul Rinkulus Walkway running between Washington and Shawmut) because of the Silver Line Stop in front of Project Place.
- Kids warming up/waiting for their game use the triangular lawn panel south of the tot lot. Grass is difficult to establish and maintain here
- After a heavy rain, left field and the area beyond the fence line are very wet. Need better drainage.
- Wilkes Passage (1313 Washington) Pathway is not as heavily used
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What would you like to see?

- Area behind left field is used for team gatherings (cookouts, etc). It is shady and hard to grow grass. Keep the trees in this area. It is also used as a secondary dog area.
- Keep the openness of the park. There was concern in the 2007 renovation that the lack of fences would allow kids to run into Washington Street or feel vulnerable. There do not appear to be any injuries from that.
- Planting in front of the dog area on Washington Street needs help – it is not sunny
- The planting at the main walkway between Washington and Shawmut (Paul Rinkulus Walkway) is better because it is sunnier
- Place bollards at the corners to prevent vehicles from cutting them
- The maintenance staff is over taxed. They have a lot of areas other than Peters to get to in one day and so it is understandable that they literally cut corners where they can.

- Trash locations should be studied. There are 3 cans south of the play area and 3 benches.
- Bring in the Fresh Food Truck to give the park regulars a purpose and promote a better community Connection.
- Reclaim the triangular former island on the 3rd base dugout side. Cobbles are difficult to walk on.
- **More development will lead to additional use of the park. How can we make sure that this project is not just a band aid or half measure that will have to be revisited in 3-5 years? We don't want to have to return to these issues because there are more residents in the neighborhood exacerbating the deterioration of the park. This is one of the most utilized parks and it will increase because of additional development. Are we able to do what needs to be done?**
- Peters is also Cathedral's home field for softball. Other communities and towns come to Peters to use the park.
- Off season, the park is used for football, soccer (Soccer Super Stars)
- Volunteers plant the planters. They have planted city donated tulips, but it is bare because of trampling. Any planting needs to be robust and hardy.
- Is asphalt the right material?