



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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Indian Mounds Regional Park Design Advisory Committee Meeting #2 Notes DRAFT

April 23, 2013

Staff Present:

Ellen Stewart, Project Manager, Parks & Recreation Design
Karin Misiewicz, Parks & Recreation Operations
Diane Voyda, Parks & Recreation Operations
Brian Tourtelotte, Manager, Parks & Recreation Design
Ellen Biales, Council Member Lantry's Office
Karin DuPaul, Dayton's Bluff Community Council
Amanda Lovelee, City Artist in Residence

Committee Members Present:

Tracy Sides
Kara Younkin Viswanathan
Steve Trimble
Holly Windingstad
Paula Roberto
Jeff Jones
Anne Kolar

Committee Members Absent:

Jenni Buran
Linda LaBarre
Melanie Buetow
Eva Pranis
Martin Russo

1. Welcome and Introductions and Review
2. Schedule – one more meeting with the Design Advisory Committee. Will look at schedule for District Council meetings to see if we can fit into their summer meeting for an open house to present final conceptual design.
3. Site approach – maximize budget and minimize disturbance
 - a. Trees.
 - i. Ash trees to come out but we will minimize removals to construction limits
 - b. Work with the existing topography
 - i. Most programmatic elements require flatter topography
 - ii. Amphitheater requires some slope
 - c. Existing infrastructure
 - i. Pathways in decent shape
 - ii. Existing restroom building and shelters are well used
 - d. Last meeting there was a suggestion to leave the small shelter in place until we have \$ to put in a new one. Staff agrees and feels that it makes sense to work with what we have and use the dollars allocated for this project toward the play area rather than using them for extensive grading or removal of features that are still working.
 - e. Interdependent moving parts – where to put the large shelter, where to put the amphitheater, where to put the small shelter, relationships between uses including programming, topography, sound, disturbance, accessibility
4. Architecture: Setting style to avoid needing to duplicate efforts
 - a. Existing restrooms
 - i. Seems to be in decent shape and it is where it is. Fiscally responsible solution would be to keep it rather than leveling it. Can that architecture fit in with the park? There

are things that we could do that would make it more similar to the pavilion at the end of Earl.

- As you enter from Earl and Thorn see unremarkable back side
 - Make the structure more inviting.
 - Allow for more shaded coverage on the back side
 - Make it more useful than what it is
 - Provide visual interest all around the building
 - Tie architecture to the neighborhood - wrap around porch
 - Pretty consistent with the pavilion
 - Include more drinking fountains in the park
- ii. Is this a building that makes sense to make more of a visual feature, or should it blend in?

b. Small shelter –

- i. Currently has outward focus – and is adjacent to the play area 24x24 structure New structure would be a bit larger approximately 34'x24'
- Pole in the middle is an issue with function
 - Combine with the restroom facility – add on to the restroom
 - What if the style was more connected with the theme of the play area?
Could be done through a different architecture than the other structures in the park or particular elements i.e. columns could be more in the spirit of the play area. Maybe put the structure within the play area itself.
 - Like the prairie style of the pavilion and would like the shelter to match that
 - Consider using large long table instead of series of tables – get people together

c. Large Shelter

- i. New needs – accommodate more people and add warming kitchen, possibly another restroom depending on proximity to the existing restroom facility, amphitheater, etc.
- Fire pit/ fireplace would be great to have
 - Great idea to have a locked facility for controlled access and more formal use
 - Access to facility for delivery vehicles (caterer, etc.)
 - Having a view over the bluff for the large shelter would be great
 - Don't like the existing shelter. Does not set a good example for design
 - Should have the shelter on the south side of the park for access to parking
 - May need to consider parking needs in the final placement – there may be a need to add parking in the park when these structures are built.

d. Amphitheater

- i. Small groups, decide row spacing based on intimacy desired
- ii. Considerations include sight lines, solar orientation, sound
- iii. What density of architecture do we want? Do we want to concentrate the structures on the site or spread them out?
- Like that the east half of the park is free of structures
 - Should have amphitheater be accessible and near restrooms
 - Like location along the north trail for Serenity access
 - Separate from play area

5. Play Area

a. Style

- i. Last meeting many expressed desire for “natural” play area – different interpretations of Natural. What do you envision?
- Artistic and whimsical, but looks natural – maybe by an artist (custom manufacturing)
 - Destination play often mimics a theme, but doesn't need to be a train or a boat
 - Love the turtle
 - Embankment slide looks really fun
 - Like the fairy houses on the slide, could work more whimsy into it
 - Much more interested in nature that is trees and rocks and environment

b. Story

- i. Foster stewardship through the design
 - ii. Tie the story to the park – make it authentic and ensure it resonates with users
 - iii. Trees are a great amenity in this park - provide a lot of ambience – their presence at the time of the original land survey in the late 1800s ties us to the importance of trees in human settlement. Could the theme or story for the play area center on trees and focus on connecting people to nature and the environment through a connection to trees? Explore ways to highlight trees as habitat for humans, for wildlife, explore their connection to the ground and the sky, their connection to history with stories of how when they were planted, what they have “seen”.
 - At the bluff edge you see every form of transportation so benches could each tie to planes, trains, boats, etc.
 - Also land, bluff, river, trees
 - Think about stewardship of trees and environment
 - “if trees could talk”
 - Don’t want this to be an exhibit
 - Might extend out into the park with some details
 - Scavenger hunt
 - Want to be all interactive and playable.
 - ⇒ Andy Goldsworthy does interesting things that are all playable
 - Appeal to older kids too
 - Oak savannah, historically,
 - “Heritage tree” but every park has trees so that is not a unique story
 - Kids just want to play and remember it if it is cool and fun
 - Want a main element that is “wow” part of the experience, -an identity
 - Culture/history needs to go back further than just our history
 - Geology – if we go back far enough, there was a sea that made all the sandstone
 - Eagle is unique and could be here. Maybe a nest with eaglets
 - Open sided nest seems more versatile than others shown
 - Add a feather
 - Series of nests great place for snowball fight
 - Use topography - hill slides or 2 nests one high and one low so you run up and down the hill
 - Accessibility and surfacing – hard to understand costs and lifespan
6. Nest steps: send out notes with any further questions that will be helpful moving forward
 7. Next meeting will have play area design to react to with budget information

These notes reflect what I heard during the meeting. Please provide corrections or additions by the end of the day Wednesday, May 8, 2013 to me at Ellen.Stewart@ci.stpaul.mn.us for the final record of the meeting. The meeting information including the presentation and notes will be posted on the website this week.

Thank you.